The Current Status of Catholic Archives: A Survey Report

Youngok Choi and Emily Nilson

ABSTRACT

Records held in Catholic archives offer unique value for scholarly research and public use. However, Catholic archives professionals have anecdotally expressed challenges in making religious records available and preserving them. To investigate the current status of Catholic archives and to identify areas of deficiency in archives administration, we designed and distributed a survey. The results indicate current shortages of staff and financial resources at Catholic archives. The data also reveal a lack of investment in technology to enhance access to religious records. Proposed solutions include collaboration, leadership, and ongoing discussions among Catholic archivists, both to monitor the status of archives as a whole and to share best practices and exemplary cases.

KEY WORDS
Catholic archives, Religious archives,
Archives administration and management

With an increase of easy access to cultural heritage and online resources, interest in previously unknown archival materials is growing. In particular, interest in and access to religious records and materials have increased for both religious and nonreligious uses.[1] Religious communities actively engage in work for cultural, educational, medical, judiciary, and social aspects of community life. Hence, records and holdings housed at religious archives offer various societal topics for use at both the scholarly and practical levels. With this trend of increased interest in and use of religious records, US Catholic archival institutions are focusing on promoting scholarly and public understanding of the records of the documentary and artifactual heritage of American Catholic culture and history.

In support of this trend, the Department of Library and Information Science collaborated with the Catholic University of America's American Catholic History Research Center to hold a series of conferences on the theme of how Catholic archives are evolving in the digital age.[2] At the conferences, many archivists and staff working at Catholic archives described the obstacles they face, including a lack of organizational understanding and investment, in advancing and innovating services and promoting the use of religious records. Likewise, a 2011 Survey of Digitized Rare Catholica among North American Catholic college, university, and seminary libraries revealed that 67% of such institutions have not yet digitized their Catholic resources.[3] Most indicated challenges, like lack of money, staff, and time, in undertaking digitization projects or innovating their archival programs. Such anecdotes and the survey findings suggest a need to explore the state of Catholic archives' operations and resources, to define appropriate actions, and to conduct further research on increased access and use of religious materials. In response, the researchers decided to conduct a survey to provide a snapshot of Catholic archives' operations supporting access and use. The survey goal was to define the current status of Catholic archives in adapting to this changing world. Results will guide the professional archival community and leaders of Catholic institutions in discussions about collaborative actions and decisions necessary to promote access and uses for invaluable Catholic Church records and heritage.

Related Studies

Archival work in American religious institutions dates back to the mid-nineteenth century.[4] However, religious archival practice was isolated from work in broader archival professional communities, and critical examination or discussion of religious archival practice was lacking until the 1960s.[5] During the 1970s and 1980s, professional discourse began to address archival programs at religious institutions as well as at Catholic churches, and they advanced

considerably by establishing their own identity within the archival profession. A few manuals and guidelines emerged to provide archival policy and practice recommendations for religious archives adhering to the same basic principles and techniques of archival work applied by the rest of the profession. Of particular note and regard are August Suelflow's 1980 manuscript, "Religious Archives: An Introduction," and James O'Toole's 1991 "Basic Standards for Diocesan Archives: A Guide for Bishops, Chancellors, and Archivists."[6] These guidelines of standardized practice demonstrate the relevance of religious archives within the archival profession.

During the same period, Catholic Church archives rapidly flourished after US bishops agreed on the need to organize archival materials. In 1974, the US Catholic Bishops' Committee for the Bicentennial issued the publication, "A Document on Ecclesiastical Archives," in which they called for a "nationwide effort to preserve and organize all existing records and papers that can be found in chancery offices, general and provincial houses of religious orders, and institutions of our country."[7] This publication triggered a burst of organizing activity in Catholic archival institutions across the United States. Many Catholic congregations ratified their archival programs and hired trained archivists. Between 1974 and 1997, the number of dioceses with archivists or diocesan historians jumped from 20 to 100.[8] Overall, the number of religious archivists doubled, while the percentage of archivists employed by academic institutions remained stable between 1973 and 1982, as David Bearman found in a survey of the archival profession.[9]

However, Catholic archives continued to struggle. O'Toole attributes the continuing challenges of these archival programs to their shrinking memberships and the closing of religious communities due to the aging of sisters. Some archives closed or merged with others.[10] Such challenges also prompted archivists to examine the efforts of administrators to generate an interest in religious archives. Multiple surveys previously assessed religious archives, and Catholic archives in particular. In 1998, Christine Taylor designed and distributed an instrument to gauge the staffing and resource support of Catholic archives and their policies.[11] Her purpose was to assess the state of archives whose archivists belonged to the Association of Catholic Diocesan Archivists (ACDA), to what degree these archivists relied on the ACDA for professional guidance, and what the ACDA could further offer to its members. Within these parameters, she found that less than half of the survey respondents had any finding aids. The archives were likely to primarily serve genealogists and historians, who usually contacted the archives by phone. However, the study did not directly address the holdings of the archives, the volume of their cataloging backlogs, or their physical storage, digitization efforts, digital storage, or digital accessibility. This lack of assessment of any digital metrics

indicates the age of the survey, and, even if it had addressed such topics, the findings would no longer be current. In 2011, Martha Loesch, Marta Deyrup, and Pat Lawton focused on archives in Catholic academic institutions in North America, their digitization efforts, and the use of their digital resources.[12] This survey found that the majority of institutions did not have digitization projects primarily because of a dearth of time, labor, and funding. However, the majority of institutions that did possess digitized collections experienced a demand among users for those collections. While the scope of this survey was narrow, it focused on a gap in the knowledge and understanding of and provided data on the development of digital collections in Catholic archives. Similarly, in 2016, Colleen Hoelscher addressed digital access to diocesan archives including contact emails, websites, and online research discovery tools.[13] The survey's scope was again narrow, concentrating on a specific, modern issue facing archives. It found that while the majority of dioceses offered information regarding their archives online, the ease of finding that information varied. Of these, far fewer provided discovery tools for collection holdings. The combined findings of Hoelscher and Loesch, Deyrup, and Lawton indicate where Catholic archives were failing to fully engage with potential users of their collections, which merits further investigation.

In contrast, Liz Bishoff and Tom Clareson in 2014 provided context for Catholic archives within a broader study of religious archives regarding basic administration, digitization, preservation, resources, policies, and accessibility.[14] The study found a lack of resources, particularly staff and funding, to be a primary issue confronting religious archives, much as did the survey of Loesch, Deyrup, and Lawton, and provided detailed data for each topic addressed. However, the researchers assessed the results as a whole, not breaking them out by denomination, which prevents an exact assessment of Catholic archives or a comparison of them to religious archives as a whole or against other religions. Jackie Dooley and Katherine Luce surveyed special collections among the Association of Research Libraries (ARL) memberships of academic and research library organizations regarding resources, physical and digital collections, cataloging, users, and accessibility.[15] Their report offers a view of the state of archives in 2010 in general. The authors additionally offer action items in their analysis of the results that might be useful to Catholic archives. However, it should be noted that Dooley and Luce's survey reflects a relatively narrow sample of archival programs valued by their parent organizations, which means they benefited from greater organizational commitment and support than small archives serving unique entities such as religious denominations.

While these surveys contribute to a better comprehension of the state of Catholic archives in North America and their relative standing compared to

other religious archives, none address the resources, facilities, policies, collections, digital development, and accessibility of modern archives in Catholic religious and academic institutions. A comprehensive look at all of these aspects of archives management and functionality was needed to fully assess the progress that has been made and the current needs of the community.

Methods

To explore which questions and topics ought to be included in a survey of the state of Catholic archives, we consulted previous studies of religious archives. These provided insight into what other researchers had considered important and inspired new questions within a specifically Catholic scope. Next, we created an outline of desired survey questions encompassing contextual information on the archives, administration of staff and operational budgets, the situations of their physical and digital archives collections, disaster preparedness, and digital accessibility through web presence. The final survey after revisions consisted of 71 questions, which are included in Appendix 1.

We composed the list of prospective survey participants, beginning with an in-house list of religious archives contacts that we cross referenced against the Society of American Archivists member directory, a list of all dioceses in the United States, and online searches for Catholic academic institutions and religious order archives. To contact as many diocesan archives as possible, we visited each diocesan website in search of an archives web page and contact information for an archivist or chancellor. Similar searches were performed for each academic and religious institution found online. We compiled additional participants and professional groups' listservs into the prospective survey participant spreadsheet based on professional contacts. In the end, the list consisted of 257 contacts from 81 academic institutions, 30 archdioceses, 127 dioceses, 10 professional groups, and 9 orders.

A GoogleForm survey was created with the survey questions, tested in-house, and distributed to the prospective participants by email on February 3, 2017. Reminder emails were sent on February 21, and the survey closed on March 3, 2017, after a four-week response period.

GoogleForm tallied the results. A few respondents submitted paper copies. These were input into a digital response to the GoogleForm to collect all responses in one place. The results consisted of a total of 154 respondents from 38 states, including 14 respondents from New York, 10 from Illinois, 10 from Wisconsin, 9 from Ohio, 8 from Indiana, and 8 from Texas. Among 154 respondents, 44.2% were religious order archives, 33.1% were diocesan archives, and 20.8% were part of an academic institution. A few institutions (1.9%) such as a membership organization for religious community leaders were identified as
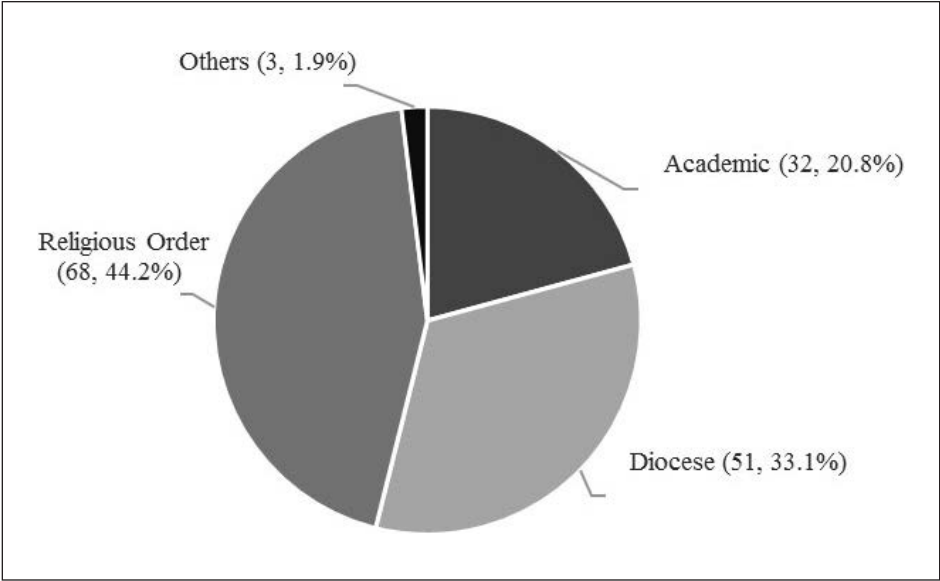
FIGURE 1. Institutional types of respondents

an "Others" category (see Figure 1). The survey did not require respondents to reveal their identities beyond choosing an institutional type. The main reason for anonymity was to keep the collected data confidential and make respondents comfortable in providing answers. We then exported the GoogleForm responses as a GoogleSheet and created an Excel sheet to separate the results by question for analysis.

Findings

The analysis of survey results focuses on the data collected regarding staffing and operations, processing and description, digital collections, and outreach, which shed light on Catholic archives' overall status in making conscious efforts to foster access and promotion of records. A discussion section addresses other relevant data including professional networking.

Staff Size

Of 154 respondents, almost half (about 48%, 74 organizations) reported a staff of one or less than one (see Figure 2). About 37.7% (58 organizations) have one paid full-time staff member, while most have no dedicated full-time paid staff. This can be compared to previous studies. The survey finding by Bishoff and Clareson indicates that about 19.6% out of 235 religious archives have no full-time staff, and 24.7% have one staff member.[16] Taylor's 1998 survey
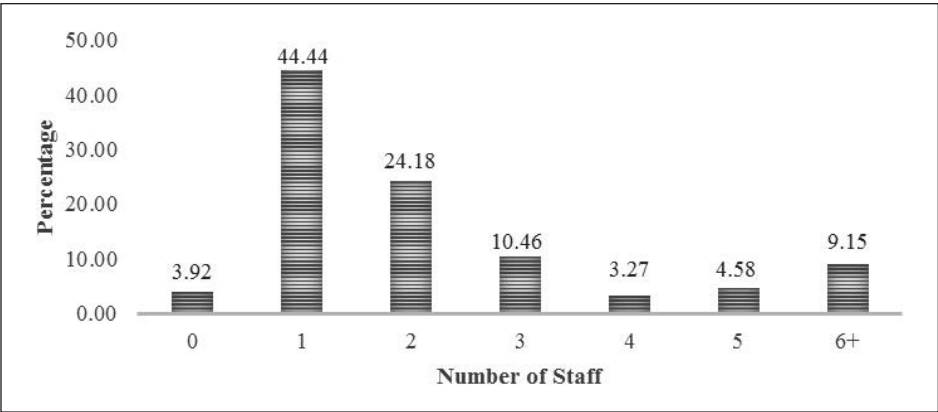
FIGURE 2. Number of archival staff at religious organizations

reported that, in 1993, religious organizations employed an average of 1.6 archival staff and that the national overall average was 1.5 per institution for paid archival employees.[17] Compared to two previous findings on staffing, the current survey illustrates that most Catholic archives are small institutions understaffed even below the national average more than two decades ago.

Annual Operating Budget

Regarding their operating budgets, about two-thirds of religious archives (71.9%, 110 institutions) operate on less than a $50,000 annually; 13.8% (21 institutions) operate on between $50,000 and $100,000; and about 14.4% (22 institutions) operate on more than $100,000. Table 1 presents the overall tabulated data for operating budgets among the responding institutions. Based on the data, we conducted a Pearson's chi-square test to assess whether a significant

Table 1. Budgets by Institution Types

Type	Budget Ranges						
	$50,000– less	**$50,001– $75,000**	**$75,001– $100,000**	**$1000,001– $250,000**	**$250,001– $500,000**	**$5000,001– more**	**Total**
Academic[18]	25 (22.7%)	2 (14.3%)	2 (28.6%)	0 (0%)	2 (20.0%)	0 (0%)	31 (20.2%)
Diocesan	37 (33.6%)	3 (21.4%)	0 (0%)	7 (63.6%)	3 (30.0%)	1 (100%)	51 (33.1%)
Religious Order	46 (41.8%)	9 (64.3%)	5 (71.4%)	4 (36.4%)	4 (40.0%)	0 (0%)	68 (44.2%)
Other[19]	2 (1.8%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (10.0%)	0 (0%)	3 (1.9%)
Total	110 (100%)	14 (100%)	7 (100%)	11 (100%)	10 (100%)	1 (100%)	153 (100%)

relationship exists between budgets and types of institutions. Results of this analysis indicate that it does not ($\chi^2(18) = 21.59$, $p < .25$).

The survey reported by Bishoff and Clareson also shows a high percentage (35.1%, or 84 responding organizations) of operating budgets at less than $50,000.[20] Financial constraint is a common issue among many archives, and it appears that those within the Catholic community that responded to the survey are under financial pressure.

Operational Hours

Unsurprisingly, those organizations that report understaffing also operate fewer hours. Results indicate that 46.8% (72) are staffed 31 to 40 hours per week; 8.4% (13) 21 to 30 hours per week; 13% (20) 11 to 20 hours per week; 26% (40) 10 hours or less per week; and 5.8% (9) more than 40 hours per week. Fewer operating hours likely results in focusing on maintaining the status quo of their archives and an inability to adequately process records.

User Groups

In terms of public services, the user groups the archives serve are diverse and not limited to clergy or congregation members. Academic users (65.6%, 101 organizations) were identified as the second most common user group following congregation members (68.2%, 105 organizations) (see Figure 3). The third group
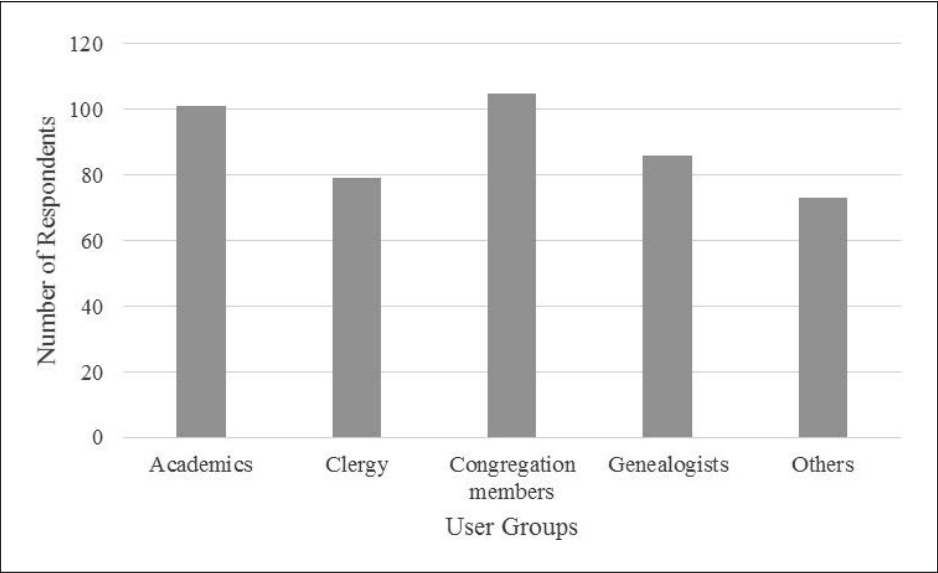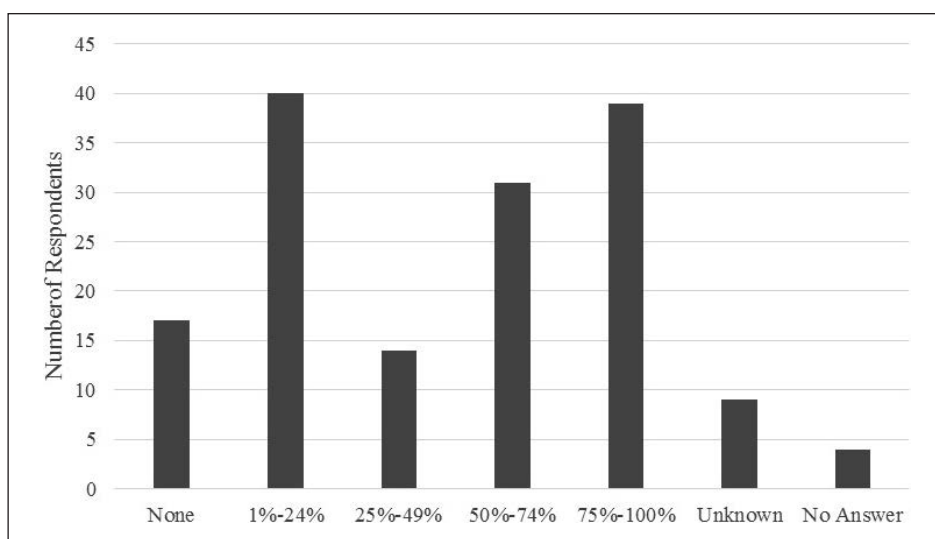

FIGURE 3. Users of religious archives

FIGURE 4. Percentage of collections documented in finding aids

was genealogists (55.8%, 86 organizations). About 73 organizations (47.4%) also listed various user groups including lawyers, media, family, community, and the public under an "Others" category.

ACCESSIBILITY

Despite the various user groups they serve, a majority of archives (63.6%, 98 organizations) require an appointment for public access. About 22.7% (35) of archives are open 31 or more public hours per week. In their survey of broader religious archives, Bishoff and Clareson reported that only 9.8% (23) did not have public hours, 10.21% (24) were open by appointment only, and about 46% of respondents were open 31 or more hours a week to the public.[21] Compared to other religious archives' public access, Catholic archives are closed or restricted from public access more often.

Among the core functions of archives are the processing and describing of collections. The survey asked respondents what percentage of their archival collections is documented by finding aids and what percentage of holdings is cataloged. As Figure 4 shows, 11% of respondents have no finding aids; about 26% of respondents indicated that 1% to 24% of their materials are documented in finding aids; 9.1% of respondents have 25% to 49% of materials documented in finding aids; and only 25.3% of respondents indicated 75% to 100% of materials are documented in finding aids. About half of the responding organizations also noted that about 50% of their holdings have not been cataloged or indexed (see Figure 5). Bishoff and Clareson's survey findings show a similarly
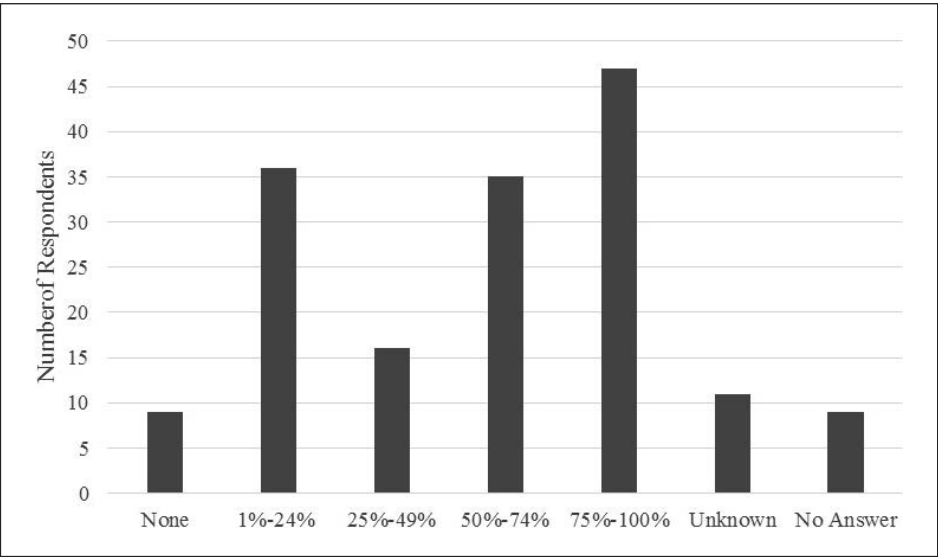
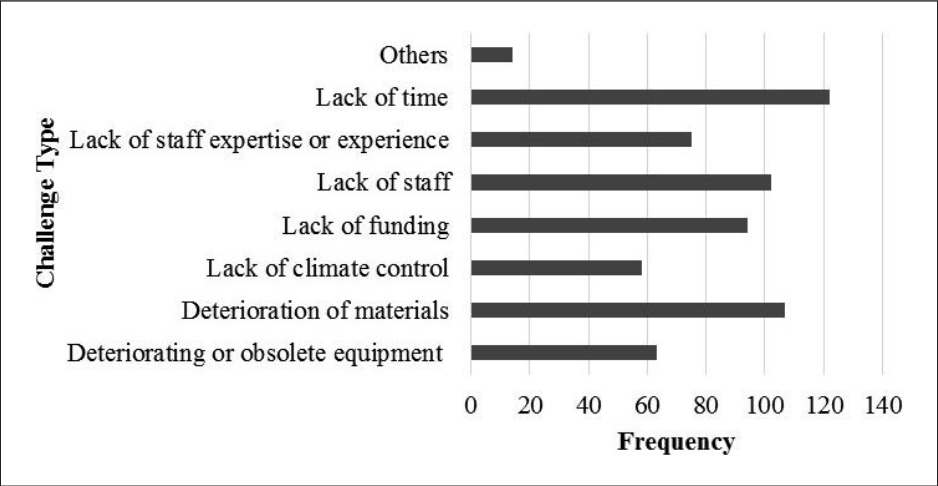**FIGURE 5.** Percentage of holdings processed and cataloged

FIGURE 6. Challenges mentioned by responding institutions

low rate of arrangement and description in religious archives.[22] They found that 25.85% had paper finding aids for 1% to 24% of their archival collections; 21.95% had no paper finding aids; and 19.02% had finding aids for 75% to 99% of their collections. For online finding aids, 84 (43.52%, across all organizational paid staff sizes) did not have these; 39 (20.21%) had them for 1% to 24% of their archival collections; 18 (9.3%) had finding aids for 25% to 49%; 13 (6.74%) for 50% to 74%; and 11 (5.7%) for 75% to 99%.

These findings indicate that many religious materials are hidden and undocumented, thus preventing their potential discovery.

Challenges

Regarding perceived challenges facing nondigital archives, respondents most frequently indicated a lack of time, followed by deterioration of materials, a lack of staff, and a lack of funding. In the "Others" category, some respondents added comments or challenges around space, lack of institutional interest or care, no challenges, or a need for staffing. Two revealing comments on staffing were: "The quantity of materials in need of processing would take a full-time professionally trained archivist several years to complete," and "There is no funding available to hire anyone with the credentials and a few years to complete the job."

Digital Archives

As digitization increases the visibility of hidden archival collections, many archives have begun initiatives for digital projects, with a priority of digitizing holdings.[23] However, this trend does not extend to Catholic college, university, and seminary libraries.[24] Bishoff and Clareson also reported that a majority (111, or 51.87%) of responding religious organizations did not digitize physical collections.[25] To identify the extent to which Catholic religious archives have undertaken digitization of their collections, our survey asked what percentage of archival holdings is digitized.

The responses show that 16% of institutions have not yet digitized their resources, and about 68% of them have attempted to digitize less than 25% of their resources (see Figure 7). Among the many types of archival holdings,
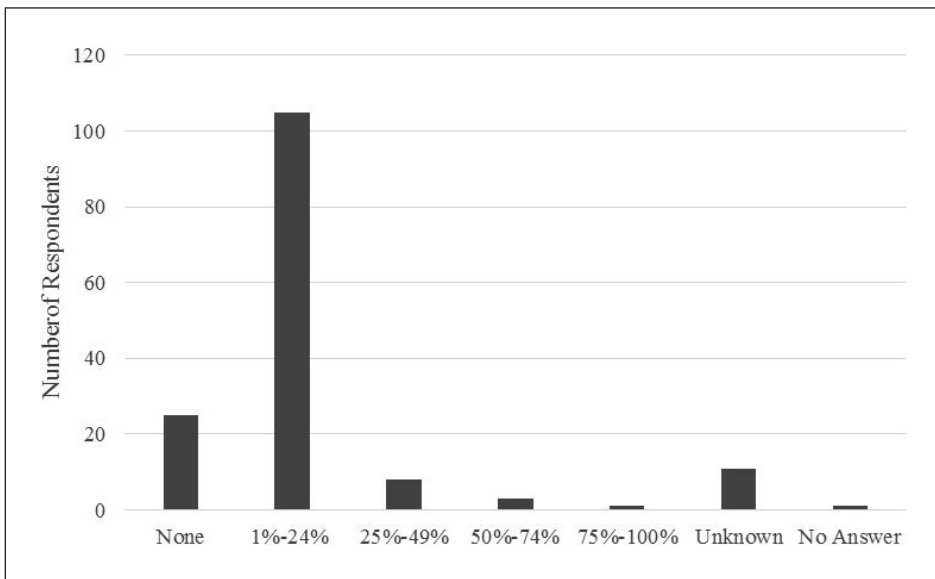

FIGURE 7. Percentage of archival holdings digitized

archivists most often prioritize photographic collections for digitization.[26] The survey also found a similar tendency to make photographic materials the first choice to digitize: 85 responding institutions (56.5%) indicate digitization of their photographic collections; 64 (41.6%) digitize archival records; 42 (27.3%) digitize film/video; and 40 (26%) digitize newspapers. Similarly, Bishoff and Clareson discovered that, at those organizations that convert materials to digital format, the top material type was photographs (86, or 81.13%) and that organizations with lower annual operating budgets digitized most.[27]

More than half of responding organizations (56.5%, or 87) mentioned that their collections include born-digital materials, while 43.5% (67) do not. On the other hand, Bishoff and Clareson reported that 40.19% (86) collected or acquired born-digital collections, and 59.81% (128) did not.[28] Among born-digital materials held in the archives, photographs (74, or 48.1%), documents (63, or 40.9%), and emails (62, or 40.3%) are the born-digital materials collected most frequently. Other types of born-digital materials in archives include digital videos (54, or 35.1%), digital audio recordings (44, or 28.6%), websites (26, or 16.9%), newspapers (23, or 14.9%), denominational records including congregational administrative records (18, or 11.7%), e-books (8, or 5.2%), and works of art (5, or 3.2%).

To gauge if archives develop and manage digital holdings systematically and strategically for long-term stewardship, the survey asked if they have established any distinctive written policies for digital collection development and digital preservation. As shown in Figure 8, most archives surveyed do not have any formal policies to develop and manage digital holdings. While digital assets are becoming an important part of Catholic religious archives' holdings,
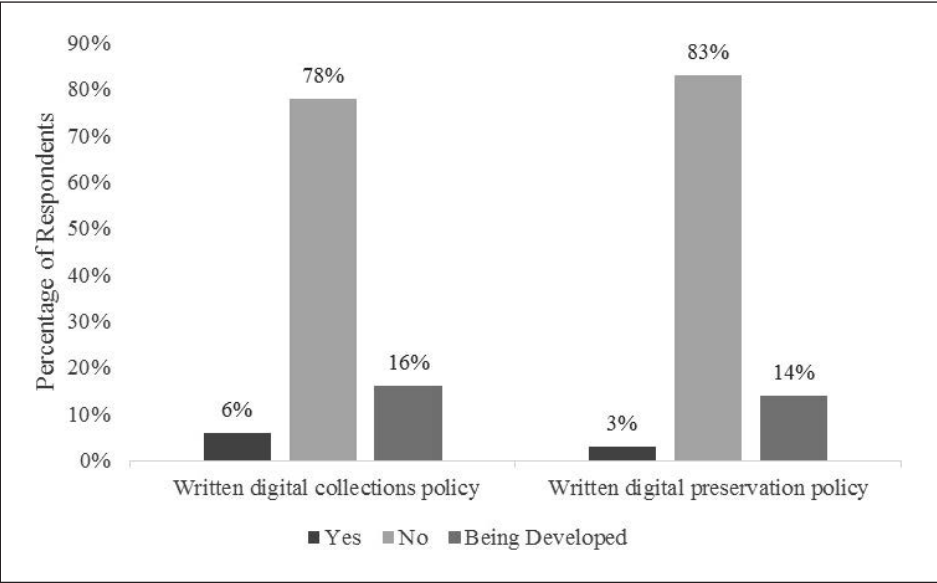

FIGURE 8. Percentage with digital collections policies and digital preservation policies
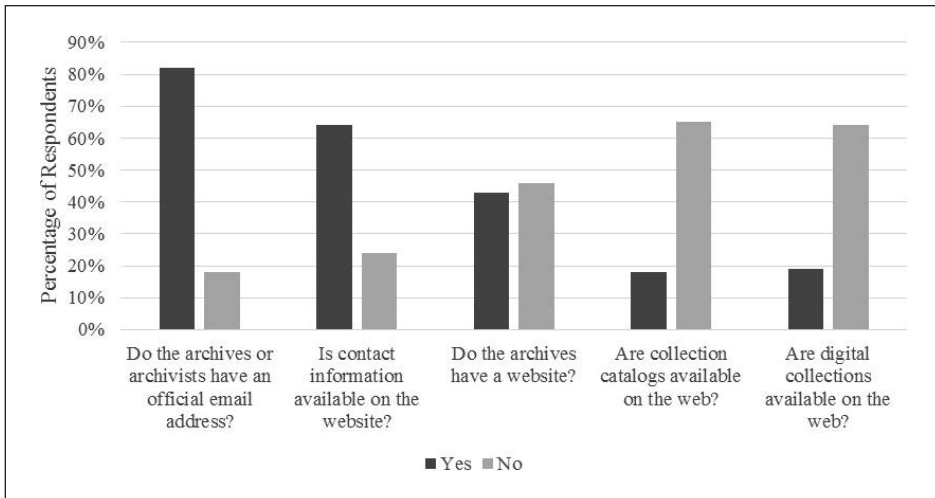
FIGURE 9. Distribution of archives' information on the Web

long-term preservation and systematic management of digital holdings are increasingly imperative, but still left to the archives' administration.

The survey also asked respondents to identify the three most serious problems facing their digital preservation efforts in the archives. The surveyed institutions most frequently answered with a lack of funding, a lack of time, and a lack of knowledge. This finding suggests that staff training and the sharing of expertise on emerging archival technology would be helpful.

OUTREACH

In today's online world, websites are an important means for archives to promote access to and use of their holdings. A website can provide not only access to basic information such as location, hours, and contact information, but also online exhibits, finding aids, databases, links to social media, and much more. In addressing website content and site surveys for archival professionals in developing public relation skills, Michele Lavoie states, "The digital environment of today demands that archival institutions not only have a web presence but that they provide quality content to their would-be users."[29] Therefore, the survey asked a few questions to understand how Catholic archives/repositories use websites to promote their collections and services. As shown in Figure 9, 46% of archives surveyed have no online presence, and about 65% have no web presence for their collection catalogs. In reality, few Catholic archives have made digital collections accessible. Considering the potential of websites to generate increased use of holdings and collections, these findings demonstrate that Catholic archives miss a fundamental opportunity to communicate with

potential users. Despite 46% of responding institutions having no dedicated archives web presence, 64% of responding institutions indicated that contact information is available on their websites. While these data seem contradictory, respondents may have been indicating that their archives' contact information is available on the website of their parent institution.

Discussion

This study investigated the current status of Catholic archives administration using a survey distributed among Catholic archives and repositories that returned 154 responses. The survey findings document that many Catholic archives and repositories are small and struggle with a lack of professional staff and resources to undertake basic operations and the administration of archives for access and use. As the archives and repository staffs are responsible for the full array of functional duties as well as for developing harmonized strategic plans for future advances in mission fulfillment, the lack of personnel hinders these archives' ability to carry out all of the possible activities, leaving a substantial portion of materials unprocessed and unpreserved. Many respondents indicated a need for cataloging or finding aids for collections (46, or 21.50% of respondents). In other words, numerous collections at local archives are not accessible and usable, a significant hindrance to their potential discovery and use.

With digital technologies and the advancement of the Web, many archives are transforming their unique holdings into digital collections, making their records widely available to outsiders. Numerous archival records and collections have been digitized for online access. Often, archives repackage digitized items as digital exhibits with contextualized interpretation. Creating online exhibitions as well as digital collections are among the common approaches archives use for promotion and outreach. Such digital showcasing of items gives the outside world a glimpse of an archives' holdings.[30]

While the survey indicates that participants are transforming their holdings into digital collections for improved access and preservation, it seems that efforts to provide users access to documents online are still inchoate. Digitization projects require a conscious effort, from planning to implementation to assessment. Indeed, undertaking a digitization initiative in a small archives hampered by lack of resources and small staff is not easy. However, highlighting some items in online exhibits would be one method of drawing users to research and use the physical collections. In the current digital environment saturated with information, outreach and marketing are also essential to promote collections to various audiences. Archivists are incorporating outreach programs to increase visibility.[31] Emerging technologies and the ubiquitous nature of the

Web are changing the way archivists provide services to the public and offering potential new ways to expand the number of users and increase awareness of archival programs and collections. In addition, librarians and archivists are using social media to broaden awareness of their resources and services and to conduct outreach activities.[32] The provision online of vital information about archives services, activities, and holdings will help users to further prepare for visits in ways that were previously unimaginable.

Today, the Web is the main place for people to find many types of information. People generally expect organizations to have websites. Parish ministers rely on resources found on the Web and look for official denominational documents there for their day-to-day practice of ministry.[33] Additionally, many records kept by archives relate to personal interests and scholarly research as well as to clerical and church-related uses.[34] As Robert Ray indicates, genealogical inquiry is the most popular form of religious record research, and it may continue to grow.[35] Thus, it is essential to provide these types of publicly available records online to be discovered, while internal documents can be kept restricted from online publication or advertisement. In 1987, Bruce Dearstyne argued that the ultimate goal of archival work is the use of archival resources and archivists need to take actions to make archival materials available for the potential uses.[36] One approach is promoting increased research use. Creating a website or online exhibit is a necessity for that purpose. It can be done easily and cheaply, as website templates on free platforms like Omeka, WordPress, and Google Sites are available. When a parent entity does not have sufficient technological infrastructure, archives can develop their own sites using these free platforms to provide valuable information and services to potential users. Hence, investment in strategic use of online presence should be prioritized. Such outreach and promotion helps archives expand the use of their holdings and contributes to enhancing their visibility in the community. Eventually, this increase of visibility can be used to advocate for potential donations, increased funding, and investments in archival operations and staffing.

Clearly, many small Catholic archival programs face hard times with budget and staffing shortages and further potential cutbacks as religious community organizations downsize, and membership decreases in number.[37] This trend of dwindling religious communities and their archival programs is likely to continue as survey data about Americans and religion reflect decreasing religious affiliation over the years. The Pew Research Center reports that the percentage of American adults who describe themselves as Christians has dropped by nearly 8 percentage points in just 7 years, from 78.4% in 2007 to 70.6% in 2014, with a drop of 3.1% of Catholics and 4.8% of Protestants; the percentage of Americans who are religiously unaffiliated has jumped more than 6 points, from 16.1% to 22.8% over the same period.[38] This trend jeopardizes religious archives and their

holdings. Archivists and religious leaders should develop strategies on how to preserve these hidden and endangered materials and make them accessible so that their values and heritage will remain available for study. Collaboration or partnership among Catholic archives would facilitate various strategic operations, such as sharing facilities and staff expertise or solutions, or collaborating on digitization programs, to name a few. However, it seems that collaboration is not common among many Catholic archives. On our survey, about 42.2% (65 institutions) indicated no collaborations with any organizations. The Survey of Digitized Rare Catholica also finds that 84% of the survey respondents were not collaborating with other colleges, universities, and seminaries on digital Catholic projects.[39]

Libraries, archives, and other cultural institutions value collaboration because they perceive its benefits to "expand educational opportunities, to meet community needs, to expand-diversify an audience or user base, to enhance the institution's stature, to enhance use of collections-programs, to be a good civic player in the community, and to leverage or expand resources."[40] Archives should also explore potential collaborations with various community groups to create community archives. Religious communities are often the primary supporters of education, medical resources, and social services for local or ethnic communities. In this regard, archives of religious communities can collaborate and partner meaningfully with public and other community organizations to collect and document their engagement in the form of a community archives movement.[41] By doing so, Catholic archives can play a role in preserving the collective memory of religious services and enduring Catholic identity in communities at large. This will demonstrate the value of archives in fulfilling their mission to Catholic churches or religious centers. In the end, such archives would be recognized in their communities, and such recognition would bring attention and support from those communities, potential donors, and leaders of Catholic institutions.

To bring change and action to make Catholic archives viable and relevant, collaboration and leadership among archivists and professional organizations are essential. To engage in a dialogue to determine future best practices, religious archives and archivists should participate in professional discourse. Many religious archivists are not associated with other religious archivists or the wider profession. A 1985 membership survey of the Archivists of Religious Institutions confirmed that only 33% of their members also belonged to the Society of American Archivists (SAA).[42] Our survey findings show a continuing trend of religious archivists' professional disengagement. About 36.4% (56) of respondents belong to SAA, 25.3% (39) to the Association of Catholic Diocesan Archives, and 20.8% (32) to Archivists of Congregations of Women Religious. It is apparent that professional engagement and networking among religious archives and staff remain relatively low. In an essay addressing issues in religious archives,

Robert Presutti (2010) acknowledges that religious archivists fail to engage their peers within their parent organizations and that recognition of archival theory is necessary to engage in contemporary discussions of archives.[43] Engagement with professional organizations and networking are essential for professionals to stay attuned with best practices, to gain insights or learn from other professionals, and to work in concert with peers.

Professional organizations offer support to and foster nurturing relationships among their members. Through professional networking and relationships, archivists and professional organizations can convene forums for organizations with lower annual operating budgets for digitization discussions or workshops to train staff, share best practices, or brainstorm ideas and solutions to improve functional operations. Archivists and leaders in Catholic archives and institutions have taken steps toward such efforts already. For example, the Catholic University of America organized a series of conferences from 2013 to 2017 addressing the importance of the records of religious orders for scholarly research and the stewardship of such archival records in the digital age among scholars, archivists, and leaders. At the conference, archivists were also able to participate in a free workshop on digitization projects and archives management practice. Subsequently, Boston College hosted a conference in July 2018 to continue the discussion among stakeholders of Catholic archives "to seek and identify solutions to the issues that communities, including those coming to completion, are facing in preserving and providing access to their archival legacies."[44] These series of conferences and workshops serve as platforms to generate dialogues, ideas, and actions to overcome the challenges Catholic archives and repositories face. Continuous dialogue and conventions among leaders and archivists will help Catholic archives find innovative and creative ways of embracing these challenges to chart promising new directions. In doing so, religious archives will successfully demonstrate the value and the relevance of their collections and archival programs to the various users and religious communities they serve. Catholic archival programs will regain momentum, support, and attention from Catholic institutions and the public as demonstrated in 1970s and 1980s, a period of "Catholic church archive renaissance."[45]

Conclusion

In his presidential address as incoming president of SAA in 2000, Thomas Hickerson asserted that the archival profession has good prospects and many opportunities to strengthen the archival field as current needs and long-term societal interests require the expertise and knowledge of archivists in managing contemporary information and preserving the documentary heritage of the world's cultures.[46] He described ten pressing challenges that the archival profession faced

at the beginning of the twenty-first century, "managing electronic documents, devoting more resources to non-textual materials, recognizing that records are global, devising new methods for description and access, expanding access and collection development priorities, generating more research on the archival aspects of information management, strengthening the Society of American Archivists, expanding the resources of the archival enterprise, and maintaining the profession's role as trusted guarantors of society's interests."[47] In dealing with such challenges, he asserted the importance of leadership by archivists and associated, effective actions. Embracing the framework Hickerson created for twenty-first-century archival work, archival communities have been striving to fulfill their mission in supporting scholarly, administrative, and personal research.

Religion has a huge impact on our culture and society. Records and documents produced from religious activities and administration are valuable and important as a cultural heritage. The roles and values of managing, preserving, and disseminating such cultural resources are vested in religious archives. Thus, as memory institutions, Catholic archives should join this vibrant movement of archival communities toward support of the societal needs of the open, networked, global society to fulfill their mission. However, many Catholic archives seem not to have flourished despite the archival proliferation of the 1980s and 1990s. The current study affirms that staff shortages and limited resources are evident among Catholic archives and that digital age practices lag behind. It is time for Catholic archives to reverse this trend. In the 1960s, Suelflow reflected that the nature of religious repositories was private and closed, and critical examination of their status, their function, their forum, and their future lacking, causing their professional counterparts to disregard them.[48] About six decades later, Robert Presutti asserted that the topic of religious archives has not received much attention within professional communities in recent years.[49] Such voices urge Catholic archives to perform a self-examination and begin a dialogue among themselves to revive their roles and values. As a memorable exchange between Alice and the Cheshire Cat reminds us, where Catholic archives ought to go from here depends a good deal on where they want to get to.[50] Conscious efforts among Catholic archivists are necessary to determine the common goal of Catholic archives to develop concrete plans toward that goal and to work with internal and external constituents to get the necessary support.

While this study helps raise awareness of Catholic archives' challenges, further studies are necessary to identify particular areas of concern in tackling tasks. Due to the limitations of the current study method in describing basic administrative aspects, such in-depth research would provide tangible solutions or ideas to adopt for improvement. In addition, archivists should be encouraged to share any successful experiences as case studies of innovation and methods of making their archival programs thrive.

Appendix 1: Catholic Archives Survey Questions

Section 1: Operations

What type of institution does the archives belong to?

☐ Academic
☐ Religious Order
☐ Diocese
☐ Other

If you answered "Other" to the previous question, please elaborate.

What is the entire staff size of the archives?

How many staff members are full time, paid employees?

How many staff members are part time, paid employees?

How many staff members are part time student employees?

How many full time volunteers or unpaid staff work in the archives?

How many part time volunteers or unpaid staff work in the archives?

What is the number of staff members with a graduate degree?

What is the number of staff members without a graduate degree?

What is the annual operating budget for the archives?

☐ $50,000 or less
☐ $50,001 to $75,000
☐ $75,001 to $100,000
☐ $100,001 to $250,000
☐ $250,001 to $500,000
☐ $500,001 to $750,000
☐ $750,001 to $1,000,000
☐ More than $1,000,000

What are the user groups of the archives? (Check all that apply)

☐ Clergy
☐ Congregation members
☐ Genealogists
☐ Academics
☐ Other

If you answered "Other" to the previous question, please elaborate.

What are the operational hours of the archives, in hours per week?

☐ 10 hours or less per week
☐ 11–20 hours per week
☐ 21–30 hours per week
☐ 31–40 hours per week
☐ More than 40 hours per week

What are the public hours of the archives, in hours per week?

☐ 10 hours or less per week
☐ 11–20 hours per week
☐ 21–30 hours per week
☐ 31–40 hours per week
☐ More than 40 hours per week
☐ By appointment only

Section 2: Archives

What is the mission statement of the archives?

What types of materials are contained in the collections? (Check all that apply)

☐ Archival records/transcripts
☐ Artifacts
☐ Books/monographs
☐ Bound manuscript materials
☐ Denominational records (including house of worship records, congrega-
    tional administrative records)
☐ Digital collections (including archived emails)
☐ Film/video
☐ Incunabula
☐ Maps
☐ Microfilm/microfiche
☐ Music scores
☐ Newspapers
☐ Photographs
☐ Posters, broadsides
☐ Serials/periodicals (not including newspapers)
☐ Audio recordings (cassettes, CDs, tapes)
☐ Textiles/clothing
☐ Unbound papers
☐ Works of art
☐ Other

     If you answered "Other" to the previous question, please elaborate.

Which security and/or environmental threats to the collection are protected against? (Check all that apply)

☐ Theft
☐ Earthquake
☐ Fire
☐ Flooding
☐ Hurricane
☐ Tornado
☐ Other

Are the materials stored in a climate controlled area?

☐ Yes
☐ No
☐ Sometimes

If you answered "Sometimes" to the previous question, please elaborate.

Are best practices observed when storing materials?

☐ Yes
☐ No
☐ Sometimes

If you answered "Sometimes" to the previous question, please elaborate.

Are best practices observed when handling materials?

☐ Yes
☐ No
☐ Sometimes

If you answered "Sometimes" to the previous question, please elaborate.

When was the last preservation survey conducted?

What percentage of the collection is documented in finding aids?

☐ None
☐ 1–24%
☐ 25–49%
☐ 50–74%
☐ 75–100%
☐ Unknown
☐ N/A

What percentage of the holdings has been processed and cataloged?

☐   None
☐   1–24%
☐   25–49%
☐   50–74%
☐   75–100%
☐   Unknown
☐   N/A

Is there a written collections policy?

☐   Yes
☐   No
☐   One is currently being developed

Is there a written preservation policy?

☐   Yes
☐   No
☐   One is currently being developed

Is there a written disaster plan?

☐   Yes
☐   No
☐   One is currently being developed

If there is a written disaster plan, is it up to date?

☐   Yes
☐   No

If there is not a written disaster plan, why not?

☐   Staff do not have the time to write one
☐   Staff do not have the expertise to write one
☐   It is not a priority
☐   Staff is/was unaware of the need for a disaster plan
☐   Other

    If you answered "Other" to the previous question, please elaborate.

Are staff trained in the collections, preservation, and disaster policies?

☐ Yes
☐ No

How much staff time (by paid and/or volunteer workers) is devoted to preservation activities in full time equivalents (a full time equivalent of 1 being a 40-hour work load)?

What are the challenges facing non-digital archives? (Check all that apply)

☐ Deterioration of materials
☐ Lack of climate control
☐ Deteriorating or obsolete equipment
☐ Lack of funding
☐ Lack of staff
☐ Lack of staff expertise or experience
☐ Lack of time
☐ Other

    If you answered "Other" to the previous question, please elaborate.

Section 3: Digital Archives

What percent of the archival holdings are digitized?

☐ None
☐ 1–24%
☐ 25–49%
☐ 50–74%
☐ 75–100%
☐ Unknown
☐ N/A

What materials (if any) are prioritized for digitization? (Check all that apply)

☐ Archival records/transcripts
☐ Books/monographs
☐ Bound manuscript materials
☐ Denominational records (including house of worship records, congregational administrative records)
☐ Film/video
☐ Incunabula
☐ Maps
☐ Microfilm/microfiche

- ☐ Music scores
- ☐ Newspapers
- ☐ Photographs
- ☐ Posters, broadsides
- ☐ Serials/periodicals (not including newspapers)
- ☐ Audio recordings (cassettes, CDs, tapes)
- ☐ Unbound papers
- ☐ Other

　　If you answered "Other" to the previous question, please elaborate.

Does the collection include born-digital holdings?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

What types of collection materials are born-digital? (Check all that apply)

- ☐ E-books
- ☐ Denominational records (including house of worship records, congregational administrative records)
- ☐ Documents
- ☐ Digital video
- ☐ Email/electronic communications
- ☐ Newspapers
- ☐ Photographs
- ☐ Digital audio recordings
- ☐ Web sites/social networking
- ☐ Works of art
- ☐ Other

　　If you answered "Other" to the previous question, please elaborate.

Does the archives have an electronic records management system to capture and store electronic documents such as email or spreadsheets?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ One is currently being developed

Are digital materials backed up?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Are digital materials backed up to multiple locations?

☐ Yes
☐ No

Are digital materials backed up on stable storage media?

☐ Yes
☐ No

Is sustainability taken into account during the digitization process?

☐ Yes
☐ No

Are preservation and sustainability maintenance actions performed on digital materials as needed?

☐ Yes
☐ No

Is there a written digital collections policy?

☐ Yes
☐ No
☐ One is currently being developed

Is there a written digital preservation policy?

☐ Yes
☐ No
☐ One is currently being developed

Are these policies up to date?

☐ Yes
☐ No

Are staff trained in these policies?

☐ Yes
☐ No

Are rights management concerns taken into account when acquiring born-digital materials?

☐ Yes
☐ No

Are rights management concerns taken into account when digitizing archival materials?

☐ Yes
☐ No

Do you record rights management metadata?

☐ Yes
☐ No

How often is metadata for digital holdings updated?

Is a portion of the budget specified for digital archives or digital preservation?

☐ Yes
☐ No

   If so, how much?

Is a portion of the budget specified for sustainability efforts of the digital collection?

☐ Yes
☐ No

What are the funding sources for digital preservation? (Check all that apply)

☐ Federal agencies
☐ Individual contributions
☐ Line Item in unit's operating budget
☐ Parent institution
☐ Private foundations
☐ State library grants
☐ None
☐ Other

   If you answered "Other" to the previous question, please elaborate.

In which areas of digitization would external support be helpful? (Check all that apply)

☐ Digital Asset Management Systems or Institutional Systems
☐ Digital material accessibility
☐ Equipment usage
☐ Funding

☐ Metadata

☐ Preservation/Sustainability

☐ Prioritization

☐ Project management

☐ Rights management

☐ Specialty formats of original materials

☐ Storage

☐ Other

    If you answered "Other" to the previous question, please elaborate.

What are the 3 most serious problems facing digital preservation efforts in the archives?

Section 4: Outreach

Does the archives or archivist have an official email address?

☐ Yes

☐ No

Does the archives have a website?

☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ One is currently being developed

Is contact information available on the website?

☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ Not yet, but it is a goal

Are collection catalogs available on the website?

☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ Not yet, but it is a goal

Are digital collections available on the website?

☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ Not yet, but it is a goal

Does the website provide a search function for collection holdings?

☐ Yes
☐ No
☐ Not yet, but it is a goal

Is the collection policy available on the website?

☐ Yes
☐ No
☐ Not yet, but it is a goal

Does the website include records request forms?

☐ Yes
☐ No
☐ Not yet, but it is a goal

What organizations does the archives belong to? (Check all that apply)

☐ Academy of Certified Archivists
☐ American Catholic Historical Association
☐ American Library Association
☐ American Society of Church History
☐ ARMA (formerly the Association of Records Managers and Administrators)
☐ American Theological Library Association (ATLA)
☐ ATLA Regional Group
☐ Association of Catholic Diocesan Archivists
☐ Association of Christian Librarians
☐ Association of Jewish Libraries
☐ Association for Jewish Studies
☐ Association of Moving Image Archivists
☐ Archivists for Congregations of Women Religious
☐ Archivists of Religious Collections Section
☐ Archivists of Religious Institutions
☐ Catholic Library Association (CLA)
☐ CLA local chapter
☐ Mid-Atlantic Regional Archives Conference
☐ National Association of Government Archives and Records Administrators
☐ National Episcopal Historians and Archivists
☐ Society of American Archivists (SAA)
☐ State Library Association
☐ Other

If you answered "Other" to the previous question, please elaborate.

What organizations do staff members belong to? (Check all that apply)

- ☐ Academy of Certified Archivists
- ☐ American Catholic Historical Association
- ☐ American Library Association
- ☐ American Society of Church History
- ☐ ARMA (formerly the Association of Records Managers and Administrators)
- ☐ American Theological Library Association (ATLA)
- ☐ ATLA Regional Group
- ☐ Association of Catholic Diocesan Archivists
- ☐ Association of Christian Librarians
- ☐ Association of Jewish Libraries
- ☐ Association for Jewish Studies
- ☐ Association of Moving Image Archivists
- ☐ Archivists for Congregations of Women Religious
- ☐ Archivists of Religious Collections Section
- ☐ Archivists of Religious Institutions
- ☐ Catholic Library Association (CLA)
- ☐ CLA local chapter
- ☐ Mid-Atlantic Regional Archives Conference
- ☐ National Association of Government Archives and Records Administrators
- ☐ National Episcopal Historians and Archivists
- ☐ Society of American Archivists (SAA)
- ☐ State Library Association
- ☐ Other

    If you answered "Other" to the previous question, please elaborate.

What organizations have formed collaborations with the archives? (Check all that apply)

- ☐ Academy of Certified Archivists
- ☐ American Catholic Historical Association
- ☐ American Library Association
- ☐ American Society of Church History
- ☐ ARMA (formerly the Association of Records Managers and Administrators)
- ☐ American Theological Library Association (ATLA)
- ☐ ATLA Regional Group
- ☐ Association of Catholic Diocesan Archivists
- ☐ Association of Christian Librarians
- ☐ Association of Jewish Libraries
- ☐ Association for Jewish Studies
- ☐ Association of Moving Image Archivists

☐   Archivists for Congregations of Women Religious
☐   Archivists of Religious Collections Section
☐   Archivists of Religious Institutions
☐   Catholic Library Association (CLA)
☐   CLA local chapter
☐   Local church
☐   Local college or university
☐   Local grade school
☐   Local mosque
☐   Local synagogue
☐   Mid-Atlantic Regional Archives Conference
☐   National Association of Government Archives and Records Administrators
☐   National Episcopal Historians and Archivists
☐   Society of American Archivists (SAA)
☐   State library association
☐   Other

If you answered "Other" to the previous question, please elaborate.

Does the archives offer instruction or training to non-employee archivists through workshops or symposiums?

☐   Yes
☐   No

Do staff members attend workshops or symposiums hosted by other organizations?

☐   Yes
☐   No

Does the archives have methods of assessment in place to evaluate outreach success?

☐   Yes
☐   No

Do you have any additional comments for this survey?

What is the zip code of your archives?

Would you be interested in participating in a follow up survey for further study? If so, please type your email address below.

Notes

1   Robert C. Ray, "No One has Ever Seen God: The Use of Religious Archives for Nonreligious Purposes," *Journal of Religious & Theological Information* 7, nos. 3–4 (2009): 149–60; Jillian M. Slater and Colleen Mahoney Hoelscher, "Use of Archives by Catholic Historians, 2010–2012: A Citation Study," *Archival Issues* (2014): 43–56; Jonathan Lawler, "Use in Protestant Archives of the United States," *Journal of Archival Organization* 11, nos. 3–4 (2013): 146–74.

2   Rhina Guidos, "Panel: Archives of Religious Orders Tell History of US Church," Catholic News Service, March 30, 2017, http://www.catholicnews.com/services/englishnews/2017/panel-archives-of-religious-orders-tell-history-of-us-church.cfm.

3   Martha Fallahay Loesch, Marta M. Deyrup, and Pat Lawton, "Survey of Digitized Rare Catholica: Summary Report of Results," Catholic Research Resources Alliance, https://crra.memberclicks.net/assets/docs/survey_report.pdf.

4   Peter J. Wosh, "Keeping the Faith? Bishops, Historians, and Catholic Diocesan Archivists, 1790–1980," *The Midwestern Archivist* 9, no. 1 (1984): 15–26.

5   August R. Suelflow, "The Struggle of Church Archives for Respectability," *American Archivist* 24, no. 4 (1961): 403–8; August R. Suelflow, "Maximum and Minimum Standards for Religious Archives," *American Archivist* 32, no. 3 (1969): 225–29.

6   August R. Suelflow, *Religious Archives: An Introduction* (Chicago: The Society of American Archivists, 1980); James M. O'Toole, *Basic Standards for Diocesan Archives: A Guide for Bishops, Chancellors, and Archivists* (Chicago: Association of Catholic Diocesan Archivists, 1991).

7   Committee for the Bicentennial, "A Document on Ecclesiastical Archives" (Washington, DC: National Conference of Catholic Bishops, 1974).

8   James M. O'Toole, "Diocesan Archives: Twenty-Five Years of Preserving American Catholic History," *US Catholic Historian* 16, no. 1 (1998): 1–3.

9   David Bearman, "1982 Survey of the Archival Profession," *American Archivist* 46, no. 2 (1983): 237.

10 Fernanda Perrone, "Vanished Worlds: Searching for the Records of Closed Catholic Women's Colleges," *Archival Issues* (2006): 119–49; James Geary, "Catholic Archives in a Public Institution: A Case Study of the Arrangement between Kent State University and the Diocese of Youngstown, Ohio," *American Archivist* 46, no. 2 (1983): 175–82; Colleen McFarland, "End Times or New Life? Thoughts on the Future of American Religious Archives," *Catholic Library World* 83, no. 2 (2012): 107–11.

11 Christine Taylor, "Diocesan Archivists: Models for Stewardship," *US Catholic Historian* 16, no. 1 (1998): 15–22.

12 Loesch, Deyrup, and Lawton, "Survey of Digitized Rare Catholica."

13 Colleen Mahoney Hoelscher, "Online Access to American Diocesan Archives: Current State and Lessons for Other Repositories," in *Fostering Global Communication among Religions and Libraries: IFLA RELINDIAL SIG Satellite Meeting 2016* (Chicago: American Theological Library Association, 2017), 4–8, https://digitalcommons.trinity.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1094&context=lib_faculty.

14 Liz Bishoff and Tom Clareson, *In Good Faith: Collection Care, Preservation, and Access in Small Theological and Religious Studies Libraries Survey Report* (Chicago: American Theological Library Association, 2014).

15 Jackie M. Dooley and Katherine Luce, *Taking Our Pulse: The OCLC Research Survey of Special Collections and Archives* (Dublin, OH: OCLC Research, 2010), https://www.oclc.org/content/dam/research/publications/library/2010/2010-11.pdf.

16 Bishoff and Clareson, *In Good Faith*, 5.

17 Taylor, "Diocesan Archivists," 15–22.

18 "Academic" is missing one entry.

19 "Other" includes a religious community.

20 Bishoff and Clareson, *In Good Faith*, 6.

21 Bishoff and Clareson, *In Good Faith*, 5.

22 Bishoff and Clareson, *In Good Faith*, 14–15.

23 Dooley and Luce, *Taking Our Pulse*.

24 Loesch, Deyrup, and Lawton, "Survey of Digitized Rare Catholica."

25 Bishoff and Clareson, *In Good Faith,* 16.

26 Dooley and Luce, *Taking Our Pulse*; Bishoff and Clareson, *In Good Faith*.

27 Bishoff and Clareson, *In Good Faith,* 16.

28 Bishoff and Clareson, *In Good Faith,* 17.

29 Michele M. Lavoie, "Websites," in *Public Relations and Marketing for Archives*, ed. Peter J. Wosh and Russell D. James (Chicago: Neal-Schuman Publishers, Inc., and Society of American Archivists, 2011), 9.

30 Lavoie, "Websites," 27.

31 Adam Berenbak, Cate Putirskis, Genya O'Gara, Claire Ruswick, Danica Cullinan, Judy Allen Dodson, Emily Walters, and Kathy Brown, *SPEC Kit 317: Special Collections Engagement* (Washington, DC: Association of Research Libraries, 2010).

32 Nancy L. Godoy-Powell and Elizabeth G. Dunham, "21st Century Community Outreach and Collection Development: ASU Chicano/a Research Collection," *Journal of Western Archives* 8, no. 1 (2017); David B. Malone, "Raising an Ebenezer": Archives as a Means of Religious Remembering at Wheaton College," *Theological Librarianship* 8, no. 1 (2015).

33 Kevin L. Smith and Vicki L. Smith, "The Impact of the Internet on Parish Ministry: A Survey and Annotated List of Web Resources," *Journal of Religious & Theological Information* 4, no. 1 (2001): 9–24.

34 Ray, "No One has Ever Seen God," 149–60.

35 Ray, "No One has Ever Seen God," 149–60.

36 Bruce Dearstyne, "What Is the Use of Archives? A Challenge for the Profession," *American Archivist* 50, no. 1 (1987): 76–87.

37 Perrone, "Vanished Worlds," 119–49; McFarland, "End Times or New Life?," 107–11.

38 Pew Research Center, "America's Changing Religious Landscape," http://www.pewforum.org/2015/05/12/americas-changing-religious-landscape/.

39 Loesch, Deyrup, and Lawton, "Survey of Digitized Rare Catholica."

40 Alexandra Yarrow, Barbara Clubb, and Jennifer-Lynn Draper, *Public Libraries, Archives and Museums: Trends in Collaboration and Cooperation* (The Hague: International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions, 2008).

41 Andrea Copeland, "Community Archives," in *Annual Review of Cultural Heritage Informatics*, ed. Samantha K. Hastings (London: Rowman & Littlefield, 2015), 85–98; Andrew Flinn, "Community Histories, Community Archives: Some Opportunities and Challenges," *Journal of the Society of Archivists* 28, no. 2 (2007): 151–76.

42 Peter J. Wosh and Elizabeth Yakel, "Smaller Archives and Professional Development: Some New York Stories," *American Archivist* 55, no. 3 (1992): 477.

43 Robert Presutti, "Toward a Greater Discourse: Issues in Religious Archives," *Theological Librarianship* 3, no. 1 (2010): 17.

44 Boston College, "Envisioning the Future of Catholic Religious Archives," https://catholicarchives.bc.edu.

45 James O'Toole, "Catholic Diocesan Archives: A Renaissance in Progress," *American Archivist* 43, no. 3 (1980): 284–93.

46 H. Hickerson, "Ten Challenges for the Archival Profession," *American Archivist* 64, no. 1 (2001): 6–16.

47 Hickerson, "Ten Challenges for the Archival Profession," 6.

48 Suelflow, "The Struggle of Church Archives for Respectability," 403–8.

49 Presutti, "Toward a Greater Discourse," 17.

50 Lewis Carroll, "Alice's Adventures in Wonderland," in *The Complete Works of Lewis Carroll* (New York: Barnes & Noble, 2005), 64.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Youngok Choi is an associate professor in the Department of Library and Information Science at the Catholic University of America in Washington, DC. She holds a PhD in library and information science from the University of Pittsburgh. Her areas of research include information-seeking behavior, metadata development, image retrieval system design, digital libraries, social tagging, and LIS education. She teaches organization of information, digital collection development, public programming and outreach for libraries and archives, database design, human-computer interaction, and other courses. She has developed and overseen a curriculum of cultural heritage information management at the department.

Emily Nilson is a digital media specialist in PBS's Media Library. She is currently earning her master's degree in library and information science at the Catholic University of America with a specialization in digital libraries. Her interests include the digital humanities, metadata, history, and cultural heritage preservation.