

A User's Guide  
to the  
Benedictine Sisters of Chicago Archives



St. Scholastica Monastery

7430 N. Ridge Blvd.

Chicago, IL 60645-1913

(773) 764-2413 ext. 203

[archives@osbchicago.org](mailto:archives@osbchicago.org)

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## Mission

Our official records and personal papers are collected, maintained, and preserved by the Benedictine Sisters of Chicago Archives to provide our community and the wider public with research and educational resources. The Archives preserves the historical record of our monastic life of community, prayer, and service. We believe that using the Archives will strengthen peoples' faith and understanding of God's presence in the world.

## Collections Policy

### Program

Benedictine Sisters of Chicago Archives

The Archives is governed by the Prioress of the Benedictine Sisters of Chicago. The Archivist directs the Archives with input and review from the Archive Advisory Group.

### Purpose

The purpose of the Benedictine Sisters of Chicago Archive is to appraise, collect, organize, describe, make available and preserve information about our monastic community life for the purpose of knowing who we are, telling our story, teaching community history to new members, and assisting in ongoing monastic formation. The materials in the Archives are available to community members, staff, oblates, the broader Benedictine world, as well as other researchers, historians, and liturgists.

The Archives is a repository for noncurrent records of the Benedictine Sisters of Chicago. Records stored here maintain a clear account of community life, administrative policy and actions, spiritual and social programs, and the lives of individual sisters, reinforcing an image of the community that encourages an appreciation of the community's past and its role in the history of the Church in the United States among sisters, oblates, and alumni, making available a body of records useful for monastic and scholarly research in history and other disciplines.

### Collecting Focus

The collection focuses on the life of prayer and work of the community since our founding in 1861, primarily in Chicago and in Colorado. It consists of biographical information on each individual sister, the records of each Prioress, administrative records, chronology of the schools, particularly St. Scholastica Academy in Chicago, Illinois and St. Scholastica Academy in Canon City, Colorado. The collection also includes publications written by community members – books, articles, theses, and dissertations, as well as publications by oblates. Another area of focus is the liturgical and formation material used over the years. Artifacts and documents in the Archives include paper documents, photographs, books, LP records, slides, cassette tapes, video tapes, artwork by sisters, liturgical and household items, as well as digital records and digital cultural heritage material.

## Limitations

Appropriate storage and access facilities will be provided to allow the Benedictine Sisters of Chicago Archive to obtain, keep, and permit inspection of:

- Photographs, slides, and negatives
- Documents (including charts, drawings, plans, etc.)
- Published materials (including books, newsletters, and reports)
- Computerized databases
- Digital images and records
- Audio and video recordings
- Material culture of relevance to church and local history

## Acquisition of Materials

Only materials related to the focus of the Benedictine Sisters of Chicago Archives that can be securely stored and accessed will be acquired for the Archives. The Archivist will approve acceptance of materials with input from the Prioress and the Archive Advisory Group as needed. The Archives will generally house only materials that are already property of the Benedictine Sisters of Chicago.

As materials arrive in the Archives, the Archivist will complete an Accession Form to facilitate their incorporation into the Archives.

## Disposal of Materials

Materials may be removed (deaccessioned) from the Benedictine Sisters of Chicago Archives when

- It is found that they belong more properly with the records of another archive
- The Archives becomes unable to provide proper care for them
- They are deemed inconsistent with the stated focus of the Archives

Deaccessioned materials will be disposed of, given to another organization, or returned to owner, as appropriate.

Deaccessioning decisions will be made by the Archivist with input from the Prioress and the Archives Advisory Group as needed.

## Loan of Materials

Materials will not be loaned to other organizations nor will the Benedictine Sisters of Chicago Archives accept loan of materials. If such a loan were to take place in the context of say, a special exhibit, it needs the approval of the Archives Advisory Group and will be documented with a Deposit Agreement between the two organizations.

Normally, materials will not be removed from the Archives for any purpose. Researchers will use materials inside the Archive or online as digital materials become available.

# Archives Accession Form

**Benedictine Sisters of Chicago**

**St. Scholastica Monastery**

7430 N. Ridge Blvd., Chicago, IL 60645-1913

(773) 764-2413 ext. 203

Date Received	Accession No.																																									
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## Access Policies and Procedures

### Introduction

The Benedictine Sisters of Chicago Archives is committed to the principle of providing access. The Archives makes research materials available to the following researchers: community members, monastery staff as needed for their work, oblates, family of community members, alumni, the broader Benedictine world, and other historians. It is the responsibility of the Benedictine Sisters of Chicago Archives to balance the researcher's need for access with the needs for confidentiality of persons, departments, and institutions whose activities are reflected in the materials. Consequently, the use of some materials in the Benedictine Sisters of Chicago Archives, especially those of recent date, may be subject to restrictions. To preserve the integrity of the collections and to ensure that the information will be used in the most responsible manner, everyone who uses the resources in the Archives will be required to observe accepted professional archival practices.

The Benedictine Sisters of Chicago Archive applies two types of restrictions to material in the Archive:

*General Restrictions* are imposed [by consent of the community] on particular kinds of information or designated classes of materials wherever they may be found among the holdings of the Benedictine Sisters of Chicago Archive.

*Specific Restrictions* are imposed by an individual sister or other individual donor and pertain to a specific body of personal material.

Materials already published or publicly performed are available to approved researchers without restriction. Examples include Community Newsletters, Archives Newsletters, Yearbooks, Formation and On-going Formation Activities of sisters and/or oblates, i.e. Retreats, Speakers, and Lenten Evenings. Photographs are available to approved researchers. The Benedictine Sisters of Chicago Archives reserves the right to deny permission to publish images in ways inconsistent with the mission of the Benedictine Sisters of Chicago.

Materials in the Benedictine Sisters of Chicago Archives are open to the Prioress, the Archivist, and the person or the office of origin. Archive interns and volunteers are given projects that have been reviewed by the Archivist (Appendix C). Archives interns and volunteers include the following:

- *Post-secondary students* do research and provide service in the archive. They are trained and supervised by the Archivist.
- *Benedictine Sisters, Oblates, and other volunteers* are trained and supervised by the Archivist.

### Policies.

Scope. All records of the Benedictine Sisters of Chicago Archive which have been appraised as permanent, in any format, physical or digital, and that have been released for use by approved researchers unless the records contain information that falls within one or more of the General

Restriction categories in this policy or are governed by a Specific Restriction. *The primary goal of restrictions is to maintain the confidentiality of information about any member (living, deceased, or former) or third party and to protect their right to privacy.* **Confidential information** is defined as information that an individual has disclosed in a relationship of trust with an expectation that it will not be divulged without permission in ways that are inconsistent with the understanding of the original disclosure.

### **General Restrictions**

General Restriction 1. Record groups that have not been fully processed must be requested in advance to allow the Benedictine Sisters of Chicago Archive time to review materials.

General Restriction 2. Records of Prioresses are closed for 50 years after the date of creation. Minutes and Supporting Materials of the Monastic Council, the Monastic Chapter, the Corporation, and other Administrative Records are closed for 50 years after the date of creation. The Prioress may grant monastery staff access to Administrative Records.

General Restriction 3. Minutes and Supporting Materials of Department Meetings are closed for 50 years after the date of creation.

General Restriction 4. Personal papers, including oral history recordings and transcripts, of Sisters or Oblates are closed for 50 years after the individual's death. A living donor may write a letter granting researchers access to their papers; this letter will cover all future research use of the material.

### **Specific Restrictions**

Specific Restrictions cover materials donated by an individual donor: Sister, Oblate, or other donor, where the individual has specified that the materials are restricted beyond the General Restrictions. The donor must state their Specific Restrictions clearly *in writing* at the time of donation or anytime thereafter.

- a. Materials restricted for a specified period greater than 50 years after the donor's death.
- b. Materials restricted for a specified period greater than 50 years after the documented event.
- c. The donor may waive restrictions by writing a letter giving permission for use of personal materials by an individual researcher; this letter will cover all future research use of the material.

Access under the provisions of The Updated Set of Principles for the Protection and Promotion of Human Rights through Action to Combat Impunity (2005) of the United States High Commission on Human Rights: Victims of serious crimes under international law have access to archives that provide

evidence needed to assert their human rights and to document violations of them, even if those archives are closed to the public.

Procedures.

The Prioress is the initial contact person for all research requests. For community members and monastery staff, the Archivist will then interview them regarding their needs. Other researchers will be required to complete a Research Application (Appendix A). All community members, monastery staff, and researchers will follow the Benedictine Sisters of Chicago Archive Reference Policy (Appendix B).

For requests from researchers, the Prioress, in consultation with the Archivist, uses the following decision chart to determine access to archival materials:

*Archives Access Decision Chart*

1. Are requested records in the custody of the Benedictine Sisters of Chicago Archives? If yes, proceed to question 3. If no, proceed to question 2.
2. Does the Benedictine Sisters of Chicago Archives know what institution or person is likely to have the records? If yes, transfer the request or inform the applicant where the records are held. If no, write to the requester that whereabouts are unknown.
3. Are the requested records already public? If yes, inform the requester that the records are available. If no, proceed to question 4.
4. Are the records restricted for a set period that has not yet elapsed? If yes, deny the request.\* If no, proceed to question 5.
5. Are the records restricted under any other General or Specific Restriction? If yes, deny the request.\* If no, proceed to question 6.
6. Begin the review of the alignment of the research project with the values of the Benedictine Sisters of Chicago.

\*If a researcher still wishes to access closed personal papers, of a living Sister, Oblate, or former member, the Archivist will ask the donor if they are willing to write a letter granting researcher access to the material. If the researcher wishes access to closed community records, the Archivist will ask the Prioress if she is willing to write a letter granting access to the records. This letter will cover all future research use of the material.

Appendix A: Research Application

**Benedictine Sisters of Chicago Archives  
St. Scholastica Monastery**

7430 N. Ridge Blvd., Chicago, IL 60645-1913

(773) 764-2413 ext. 203

Volunteer / Researcher Application

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

*For students:* What is your school, course, and professor connected with this visit?

Project Type:   \_\_\_  Dissertation   \_\_\_  Publication   \_\_\_  Film/Video   \_\_\_  Exhibit   \_\_\_  Other

Please describe your Project or interest in our Archives:

How did you hear about our Archives?

**EMERGENCY CONTACT**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Relation: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix B: Reference Policy

### Information for Researchers

The Benedictine Sisters of Chicago Archives acquires and preserves records created by, for, and about the Benedictine Sisters of Chicago. These records include biographical information and papers of each sister, the records and papers of each Prioress, chronology and records of the community, collections related to sponsored ministries, particularly St. Scholastica High School Chicago and St. Scholastica Academy Canon City, as well as community and individual publications and manuscripts, photographs, and material culture related to community prayer and daily life.

### Hours

Monday-Friday 8:30 a.m.-8:30 p.m. by appointment

### Registration

All visiting researchers are requested to register, providing their name, address, signature, and their research topic. All internal researchers - sisters, monastery staff, and oblates are requested to register, providing their name, current contact information, signature, and research topic (Appendix A).

### Regulations

1. Coats, briefcases, parcels, and personal books are not permitted in the research area. Please leave them on the ground floor coat rack.
2. No ink of any kind may be used in the research area; use pencils only. Computers may be brought into the archives and used at the discretion of the archivist.
3. Smoking, eating, and drinking are prohibited in the archive.
4. All archival materials must be handled carefully: use only one folder at a time and keep the papers in their existing order. Do not place books or volumes face down. Do not lean or press on archival materials. Do not trace maps or other records.
5. No material in the archive may be removed from the research area.
6. Researchers requesting access to restricted materials will contact the Prioress who will decide in consultation with the archivist and the donor (regarding personal papers) or the Prioress will decide (regarding administrative and other community records). The Archives cannot permit access to these materials without written authority.
7. Researchers are advised that it is their responsibility, not the Archives', to obtain copyright clearance to publish or otherwise reproduce or distribute archival material. Whenever possible, the archivist will provide the names and addresses of copyright holders.

8. Benedictine Sisters of Chicago Archive reserves the right to deny permission to publish images in ways inconsistent with the values of the Benedictine Sisters of Chicago.  
<https://www.osbchicago.org/mission>
9. If publishing material from the Archives, please credit the Archives in this way:  
**Benedictine Sisters of Chicago Archives, Title or name of item, Date (if known).**
10. Researchers are requested to send a photo of use in exhibits and a link to any website use: [archives@osbchicago.org](mailto:archives@osbchicago.org) . Researchers are requested to send a copy of any other use of archival material, i.e. pamphlet, paper, podcast, etc.

*Notice: Warning concerning copyright restrictions*

*The copyright law of the United States (title 17, United States Code) governs the making of photocopies or other reproductions of copyright material.*

*Under certain conditions specified in the law, libraries and archives are authorized to furnish a photocopy or other reproductions. One of these specific conditions is that the photocopy or reproduction is not to be "used for any purpose other than private study, scholarship, or research." If a user makes a request for, or later uses, a photocopy or reproduction for purposes more than "fair use, "that user may be liable for copyright infringement.*

*This institution reserves the right to refuse to accept a copying order if, in its*

### Photocopying

Unless restricted or protected by copyright conditions, photocopies of material will be supplied for research purposes at the rate of 10 cents per page. Although there is no precise limit on the number of pages, it may not be possible to fill an order on the day requested, and the Archives reserves the right to carry out the work over a period.

Users requiring copies of photographs, maps, sound recordings, or moving image materials are requested to consult the archivist about conditions and charges. Researchers are not allowed to copy archival materials using their own cameras or other equipment without permission.

Archivist: Virginia Jung, O.S.B.  
St. Scholastica Monastery  
7430 N. Ridge Blvd.  
Chicago, IL 60645-1913 [archives@osbchicago.org](mailto:archives@osbchicago.org) (773) 764-2413 ext. 203

*Revised April 10, 2024; Revised September 23, 2019, September 2, 2019*

## Appendix C: Intern and Volunteer Confidentiality Agreement

I, \_\_\_\_\_ understand that in the course of my work in the  
[Printed Name]

Benedictine Sisters of Chicago Archives, I may come across archival material that has restricted access. I agree that I will not disclose the content of such material during my time working in the archive nor afterwards. Restricted material will be labeled as such or the archivist may tell me there are restrictions on it. I understand that if I have questions about the confidential nature of material that I will consult the archivist.

---

Intern/Volunteer Signature

Date

---

Archivist Signature

Date

*Revised: April 10, 2024*

*September 3, 2019*

*March 29, 2019*

*October 17, 2017*

*October 5, 2016*

\*\*\*\*\*

This policy is effective April 12, 2024. [Date]

Approved by Mary Susan Remsger, Prioress [Prioress]

Source: Benedictine Sisters of Chicago Archives

Appendix D

*Benedictine Sisters of Chicago*

*7430 North Ridge Boulevard*

*Chicago, Illinois 60645*

***DEED of GIFT for ARCHIVES***

<b><i>Date:</i></b>	<b><i>Accession #(s):</i></b>	
<b><i>Donor:</i></b>	<b><i>Street:</i></b>	<b><i>City/State/ZIP</i></b>
<b><i>Contact Person:</i></b>  <i>Sr. Virginia Jung, OSB</i>	<i>(773) 764-2413 ext. 203   archives@osbchicago.org</i>	
<p><i>The donation has been received by the Benedictine Sisters of Chicago as a gift, and the owner or their agent with full authority, desiring to absolutely transfer full title by signing below, hereby gives, assigns, and conveys finally and completely, and without any limitation or reservation, the property described below to the Benedictine Sisters of Chicago and its successors and assigns permanently and forever, together with (when applicable) any copyrights therein and the right to copyright the same.</i></p>		
<b><i>Description of the Donation:</i></b>		
<b><i>Credit Line:</i></b>		

**Signatures:**

Donor \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Archivist \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Conditions Governing Gifts:**

- 1. It is understood that all gifts are outright and unconditional unless otherwise noted upon this gift agreement.*
- 2. Gifts to the Benedictine Sisters of Chicago may be deductible in accordance with the provisions of federal income tax laws.*
- 3. The donor named on this form has not received any goods or services from the Benedictine Sisters of Chicago in return for this gift.*
- 4. The staff of the Benedictine Sisters of Chicago is not permitted to furnish appraisals.*
- 5. The Benedictine Sisters of Chicago gratefully acknowledges your gift.*
- 6. Please indicate on the form beside "Credit Line" how you would like to be acknowledged in any news releases, exhibit labels, or other publicity regarding this donation.*

## OSB Chicago Archives Strategic Plan 2022-2025

### **Benedictine Sisters of Chicago Archives Mission**

Our official records and personal papers are collected, maintained, and preserved by the Benedictine Sisters of Chicago Archives to provide our community and the wider public with research and educational resources. The Archives preserves the historical record of our monastic life of community, prayer, and service. We believe that using the Archives will strengthen peoples' faith and understanding of God's presence in the world.

### **Benedictine Sisters of Chicago Archives Vision**

- The Archives curates a collection that will become part of a collaborative archive of North American Benedictine women's communities.
- The Archives welcomes Sisters, Oblates, Alumni, Staff, and other researchers to be active users.
- The Archives provides materials for a written history of Saint Scholastica Monastery-Chicago.

### **Strategic Direction and Goals**

#### *Gain intellectual and physical control of the archives*

Develop schema for the collections; use it to reorganize Collection A: Community Records. (2022)

Write simple DACS-compliant\* series and/or subseries level finding aids (with box locations) for Collections A through F. (2022-2023)

Hire a student intern beginning Fall 2022. (2022-2023)

Determine and develop cataloging workflows for photographs and artifacts. (2024)

Gather and rehouse all AV materials and photographs. Determine what will be digitized (2024-2025)

Increase accessibility of archival material

Provide Pop-up Archives (exhibits or workshops) at different points throughout the year. (2022-2025)

Pursue archival and digital curation studies in the LIS program at Dominican University (2022-2024)

Determine viability of *Archive-It* web archiving endeavor (2022)

Select and acquire a content management system for the archives, in-house at first, but with the potential to be shared online. (2023)

Put finding aids and indices online (2023-2025)

Create and update indices for community publications, i.e. *Sacro Speco*, *Archives Newsletter*, *Our Community* (2024-2025)

Build a working relationship with IT support – in-house or contracted from another source.

Plan for transfer of the collection to collaborative archives

Schedule meetings on records management and transfer of records with monastery officers, department heads, Sisters, and the Oblate program. (2023-2024)

Accept any invitations to discuss or learn about the proposed collaborative archives and communicate any developments to the community and leadership. (2022-2025)

Get collection in compliance with any standards set forth by the North American Benedictine Women's collaborative archives. (2022-2025)

Review and update the 2019 *A User's Guide to the Benedictine Sisters of Chicago Archive*. (2024)

Weed all current collections, particularly AV, artifacts, photographs, and books. (2024-2025)

\*DACS = Describing Archives: A Content Standard, publication of the Society of American Archivists