



# Archives

Overview of Archives  
Central Dominican Repository  
Problems and Possibilities



# Why an Archives?

- Future generations and scholars
- Primary sources mitigate distortions
- Public impression vs reality



# Collect

Decisions! Decisions!

# COLLECTION POLICY

- Is it by, for or about the story and mission of the Sisters?
- Ability to preserve the item
  - e.g., No toxic elements or human remains.
- Unique, enduring quality and intrinsic worth





# How do we collect stuff?

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- A sister dies . . .
- A benefactor gives . . .
- A drop in . . . “I want this on my table when I die.”
- An anonymous deposit . . .
- An invitation . . . “Would you like this for Archives?”
- Changes in leadership or sponsorship, e.g.,
  - An administrative term ends
  - A ministry closes or is transferred





# Organize

Where does it go?

How will we know where to find it?

# PastPerfect Museum

SETUP ▾

PastPerfect Software Evaluation Version

UTILITIES ▾



## COLLECTIONS



Objects



Photos



Archives



Library

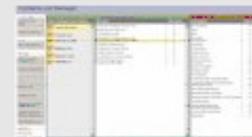
# PastPerfect Software

for museum collection management

## DEVELOPMENT



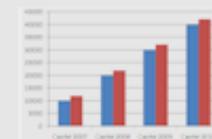
Contacts



Contact Lists



Pledges & Receipts



Campaigns

## ACTIVITIES

Temporary Custody

Accession

Exhibits

Incoming Loans

Outgoing Loans

Deaccessions

## RESEARCH

Catalog Lists

All 4 Catalogs

By Keyword

By Lexicon

By People

By Search Term

## REPORTS

Reports

Report Maker

## PEOPLE & SITES

People Biographies

Sites & Localities

## BACKUP & REINDEX

Hard Drive Backup

CD/DVD Backup

Removable Backup

Reindex

Quick Find

## OPTIONAL FEATURES

Inventory Manager

PastPerfect-Online

Virtual Exhibit

Exit

# What about electronic storage?

Recommend: Two copies of documents, one off site, one on site; keep in different media, e.g.,

- CDs and DVDs
- Magnetic tapes
- Hard drives
- Flash memory
- Cloud

# Why not just digital?

- Risks in exclusively digital records:
  - Obsolete as software changes
  - Hacking
  - Data breaches
  - Natural disasters
- Paper only requires a source of light to be accessible



# Preserve

Making it last



# Environment and careful handling

- Climate Controlled area
  - Temperature about 68 F.
  - Humidity about 45%
  - Minimal UV lights
- Supplies
  - Acid free/Lignin free boxes/folders/paper
  - pH detecting pens
  - Plastic Klips – no metal or rubber bands
  - Cotton gloves in special cases



# Share

Making it available to others

# Share as appropriate

- Leadership team
- Researchers
- Family and friends
- Development office
- On site exhibits





# *Why* do we keep stuff anyway?

- To promote our mission through the preservation of our story
- To provide a truthful record of our history
- To protect us in legal, civic and/or canonical disputes
- To offer the possibility of consistency through changes in leadership
- To provide accountability and transparency





Stock Photo vs. Reality

# Canon Law

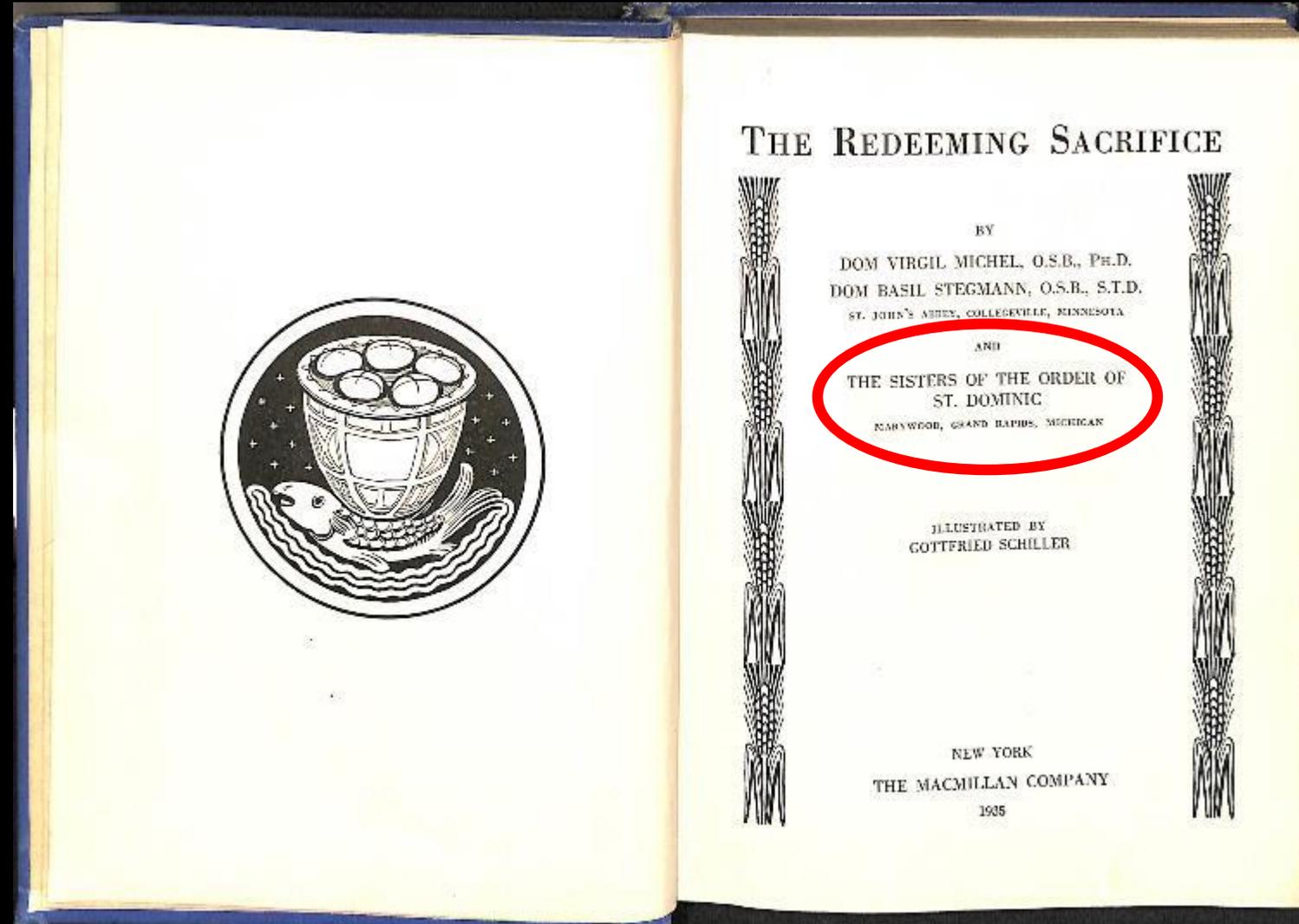
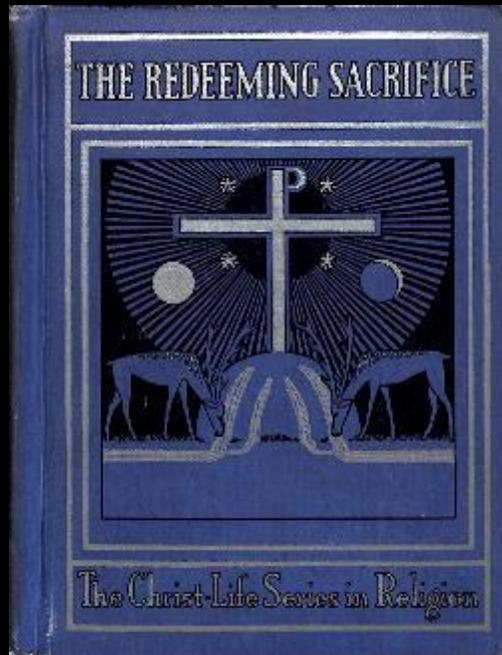
- Canons 486 – 491 may be applied to religious institutes.
- There must be an archive and the archives are a place where written documents that pertain to the spiritual and temporal affairs of the institute are safeguarded, filed, secured and made retrievable to appropriate persons.

# Civil Law

- Records are retained according to pre-established policies.
- Liability for not adhering to policies.
- Unless solely a church matter, records are not “privileged,” and are “discoverable” in a court proceeding. In abuse litigation, personnel files are “discoverable”.
- Upon the death of a person, documents can be destroyed unless there is potential litigation. This is treated as a “spoliation” of evidence.

# Why Now?

- Problem of humility
- Keep control of narrative
- Credit where credit is due



“There must be no mention of my name or of anything personal concerning me or anything I have done. Not one word must be said which might be interpreted either directly or indirectly as praise of me or of my works.”

➤ Sister Estelle Hackett

# Why do we do this?

- Our legacy is the story of our Church, our country and our lives in the 18<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> Centuries in the United States of America and far beyond.
- No one can tell our story.
- We are the keepers.

“I am wondering if you and your council have engaged in discussions regarding the future of your archives and of your cultural heritage goods. I am also wondering if you are interested in sharing your thoughts, regarding the possibility of a centralized Dominican archive.”

➤ Sr. Pat Mulcahy 2006

Has anyone every done this  
type of collaborative  
archives?

- Where would such a place be?
- Would there be just one or regional?
- Is one needed if everything is digitized?
- Who will pay for it in perpetuity?
- Who would administrate it?
- When do we need to begin?
- How much time do we have?



“Who lives  
Who dies  
Who tells your story?”

➤ Lin-Manuel Miranda



# Credits

- Graphic design: Natalie Smith
- Photo slides: 1-6, 8-14, 16. 18-28 by Natalie Smith
- Photo slide:
  - 07 – Springfield Dominicans Archives
  - 15 – Adrian Dominicans Archives
  - 17 – Racine Dominicans Archives
- Text: Sr. Mary Navarre, OP