Guide to Catholic-Related Records in the West about Native Americans

Diocese of Cheyenne

WYOMING, CHEYENNE

Diocese of Cheyenne Archives

2121 Capitol Avenue
P.O. Box 1468
Cheyenne, Wyoming 82003
Phone 307-638-1530
http://www.dioceseofcheyenne.org

Hours: By appointment only, Monday-Friday, 8:00-5:00
Access: Some restrictions apply
Copying facilities: Yes

History: Wyoming was included in the Vicariate Apostolate of the Indian Territory East of the Rocky Mountains, 1851-1857, the Vicariate Apostolate of Nebraska, 1857-1885, and the Diocese of Omaha, 1885-1887. In 1887, the Diocese of Cheyenne was erected for the entire state. In 1900 the Cheyenne Diocese reported fewer than 1,000 baptized Native American Catholics and in 1999 it reported 5,000. The Cheyenne Diocese and its predecessors administered the following Indian missions, parishes, and schools on the Wind River Reservation, Wyoming:

1884-present (Cheyenne, 1887-present) St. Stephen’s Mission (Arapaho and Shoshoni), St. Stephens
1884-1975 (transferred to a community corporation) St. Stephen’s School (Arapaho and Shoshoni), St. Stephens (Cheyenne, 1887-1975)
1906-present St. Margaret Mary Church (Arapaho and Shoshoni), Riverton
1939-present Blessed Sacrament Mission (Arapaho and Shoshoni), Fort Washakie
1963-present St. Joseph Mission (Arapaho and Shoshoni), Ethete

Holdings of Catholic-related records about Native Americans:

Inclusive dates: 1886-present
Volume: Less than 1 cubic foot
Description: The Diocese of Cheyenne Archives is not organized according to a classification scheme. Consequently, description is general and by record type.
A. Bishops’ Papers
Inclusive dates: Between 1887-present
Volume: Few items believed
Description: Believed to include correspondence with pastors, superiors of St. Stephen’s Mission, and directors of the Bureau of Catholic Indian Missions and the Commissions for Black and Indian Missions.
1. Bishop Maurice Francis Burke (1845-1923), 1887-1893
2. Bishop Thomas Mathias Lenihan (1843-1901), 1896-1901
7. Bishop David Laurin Ricken (1952), Coadjutor Bishop, 1999-2001; Bishop, 2001-present

B. Sacramental Records
Inclusive dates: 1886-1994
Volume: Few reels of microfilm
Description: Includes the following Indian parish and mission with attended Indian missions:
1. Riverton, St. Margaret Church, 1924?-present

C. Parish Files
Inclusive dates: ca. 1900-present
Volume: Unknown; few folders believed
Description: Believed to include correspondence, clippings, notes, histories, annual reports, and photographs for the following Indian mission and parishes; attended Indian missions also included.
1. Riverton, St. Margaret Mary Church, 1924?-present; 1-2 folders believed
2. St. Stephens, St. Stephen’s Mission, ca. 1900-present; 1-5 folders believed; includes plus St. Joseph/ St. James Mission, Ethete/ Arapaho, and Blessed Sacrament Mission, Fort Washakie

D. Religious Community Files
Inclusive dates: 1887?-present
Volume: Unknown; few folders believed
Description: Believed to include correspondence with superiors of St. Stephen’s Mission and mother superiors of the sisters’ communities at St. Stephen’s:
1. Jesuits, 1887?-1890?; 1-2 folders believed
2. Sisters of Charity of Leavenworth, 1880?-1890?; 1-2 folders believed
3. Sisters of St. Francis of Philadelphia, 1892?-1938?; 1-2 folders believed
E. Diocesan Newspaper
Inclusive dates: 1900s?-present
Volume: Few articles
Description: The Wyoming Catholic Register, http://www.dioceseofcheyenne.org/wyocathreg/index.html, includes occasional articles on American Indians and Catholic evangelization within the diocese and is archived online, 2003-present.