



Guide to Catholic-Related Records in the Midwest about Native Americans
[See User Guide for help on interpreting entries](#)

Diocese of Grand Rapids
MICHIGAN, GRAND RAPIDS

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Diocese of Grand Rapids Archives

M-45

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Grand Rapids, Michigan 49507
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Open: By appointment only
Access: No restrictions
Copying facilities: Yes

History: The Diocese of Grand Rapids was erected in 1882. The Grand Rapids Diocese and its predecessors have administered the following Catholic missions, parishes, and school among the Ojibwa and Ottawa Indians in Michigan:

1829-present (Grand Rapids, 1882-1971)	Holy Childhood of Jesus/ St. Peter Church, Harbor Springs
1829-1998 (closed) (Grand Rapids, 1882-1971)	Holy Childhood of Jesus/ St. Peter School, Harbor Springs
1830-present (Grand Rapids, 1882-1971)	St. Mary Mission, Burt Lake/ Sheboygan Village
1832-1893 (closed) (Grand Rapids, 1882-1893)	St. Leopold Mission, Beaver Island
1833-present (Grand Rapids, 1882-1971)	St. Ignatius/ St. Francis Xavier Mission, Middle Village/ Middletown
ca. 1840-present (Grand Rapids, 1882-1971)	Holy Cross/ St. Anthony Church, Cross Village
1853-present (Grand Rapids, 1882-1971)	Immaculate Conception/St. Mary Mission, Peshabestown/ Eagletown
1859-1897 (closed), 1927-ca. 1937 (closed) (Grand Rapids, 1882-ca. 1937)	St. Francis Solano Mission, Petoskey
1861-1899 (closed) (Grand Rapids, 1882-1899)	St. Ignatius Mission, Beaver Island
1883-1973 (closed)	St. Joseph Mission, Elbridge
1896-present (Grand Rapids, 1896-1971)	St. Francis Solanus Mission, Bay Shore
1897-1920 (closed)	Blessed Sacrament Mission, Elk Rapids
1897-1939 (closed)	St. Joseph Mission, High Island
1918-ca. 1920s (no longer Indian)	St. Helen Mission, Fern
ca. 1918-1938 (closed)	Sacred Heart Mission, Garden Island

Holdings of Catholic-related records about Native Americans:

Inclusive dates: 1883-present, n.d.

Volume: 1 cubic foot and 5 reels of microfilm

Description: 6 series include Native Catholic records. When the Gaylord Diocese was created in 1971, the Grand Rapids Diocese sent most of the parish and deed files to the new diocese. However, bishops' files, priests' files, financial and statistical reports, and photographs remained at Grand Rapids.

/1 Parish Files

Inclusive dates: 1883-1970s, n.d.

Volume: .35 cubic foot

Description: This series is divided into active and inactive parishes and is arranged alphabetically by location of the parish and chronologically there under. When the Diocese was divided, only two former Indian missions remained within the Diocese

A. Active Parishes, 1885-1947, 3 folders:

1. Elbridge, St. Joseph, 1885-1947, 2 folders:
 - a. Correspondence, 1919-1934, 1947, 22 letters
 - b. Financial records, 1885-1927, 1 folder
2. Fern, St. Helen Mission, 1929-1931, 8 letters

B. Inactive parishes, 1883-1970s, n.d., .3 cubic foot: When the Diocese was divided, the parish files of those Indian missions located in the Diocese of Gaylord were sent to this new Diocese. However, some historical records on each parish remained in the Grand Rapids Diocesan Archives. Records are arranged alphabetically by the location of the parish.

1. Bay Shore, St. Francis Solanus Mission, 1894-1927, 2 folders:
 - a. Statistical reports, 1894-1909, 1912, 1915, 1923, 1925
 - b. Financial reports, 1894-1927
2. Beaver Island, Holy Cross Mission, 1884-1970, 3 folders:
 - a. Correspondence, 1884-1970, 5 letters
 - b. Statistical and financial reports, 1884-1927
3. Cross Village, Holy Cross Mission, 1883-1970s, 4 folders:
 - a. Correspondence 1883-1889, 35 letters: correspondents include Reverend John Weikamp, T.O.R. and Bishop Henry J. Richter
 - b. Diary (typed copy) of Reverend John Weikamp, T.O.R., 1883-1889
 - c. Statistical reports, 1883-1885, 1903-1913
 - d. Financial reports, 1883-1927
 - e. Photographs, 1970s, 10 photos
4. Harbor Springs, Holy Childhood Mission, 1884-1971, n.d. 3 folders:
 - a. Correspondence, 1892-1971, 12 letters
 - b. Historical notes of Reverend Eugene Hagedorn, O.F.M., 1930s, n.d.
 - c. Statistical and financial reports, 1884-1927
5. Peshabestown, Immaculate Conception Mission, 1884-1890, n.d., 1 folder:
 - a. Statistical reports, 1884-1890
 - b. Photographs, n.d., 2 photos
6. Petoskey, St. Francis Xavier Church, 1883-1970, n.d., .1 cubic foot:
 - a. Correspondence, 1928-1970, 80 letters: major correspondents include Reverend Aubert Keuter, O.F.M. and Bishop Joseph G. Pinten
 - b. Statistical reports, 1883-1925
 - c. Financial reports, 1883-1927
 - d. Photographs, n.d., 5 photos
 - e. Clippings, n.d.

/2 Bishops' Papers

Inclusive dates: 1883-1897

Volume: .1 cubic foot

Description: This series contains Bishop Henry Richter's letterpress books of outgoing correspondence, which include numerous letters to Indian missionaries, including Reverend Servatius Altmicks, O.F.M.

/3 Financial and Statistical Records

Inclusive dates: 1883-1917, 1928-1949, 1970-present

Volume: .4 cubic foot

Description:

- A. Financial and statistical reports, 1928-1949, 1970-present, .2 cubic foot: annual reports from each Indian mission; reports from 1883-1927 are in the parish files; reports for the years 1950-1969 are lost or destroyed
- B. Mission and School statistics, 1900-1917, 1 volume: lists the number of priests, churched, families, teachers, and students and sacraments administered at diocesan churches and schools
- C. School statistics, 1883-1900, 1 volume: provides statistics on the number of teachers, enrollment, attendance and the financial; status of diocesan schools
- D. Sacramental statistics and financial data, 1883-1900, 1 volume: arranged alphabetically by parish or mission

/4 Sacramental Records

Inclusive dates: 1883-1973

Volume: 5 reels of microfilm

Description:

- A. Elbridge, St. Joseph Mission, 1895-1918, 1936-1973, 1 reel
- B. Fern, St. Helen Mission, 1895-1914, 1 reel
- C. Fremont, St. Michael Church, 1933-1936, 1 reel: records for St. Joseph Mission, Elbridge
- D. Montague, St. James Church, 1883, 1891-1895, 1920-1923, 1 reel; records for St. Joseph Mission, Elbridge
- E. Muskegon, St. Michael Church, 1923-1933, 1 reel: records for St. Joseph Mission, Elbridge

/5 "General Correspondence Files"

Inclusive dates: 1892, 1928-1937, 1970-1971

Volume: 1 folder

Description: This series consists of alphabetically arranged subject files, which include a folder labeled "Indians and Negroes," which contains correspondence between the Diocese and the Bureau of Catholic Indian Missions and the Commission for Catholic Missions among the Colored People and the Indians

/6 Diocesan Newspaper

Inclusive dates: 1948-1970s

Volume: .1 cubic foot

Description: The Diocesan newspaper, *The Western Michigan Catholic*, has had occasional articles on or references to American Indians and Catholic evangelization in the diocese.