



**Guide to Catholic-Related Records in the Midwest about Native Americans**  
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Archdiocese of Chicago  
ILLINOIS, CHICAGO

new 2003/rev2017

**Archdiocese of Chicago**  
**Joseph Cardinal Bernardin**  
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**M-1b**

Hours: Monday-Friday, 9:30-11:45 and 1:00-4:30  
Access: No restrictions  
Copying facilities: Yes

History: In 1843, the Diocese of Chicago was erected for Illinois from portions of the Dioceses of St. Louis and Vincennes. With reduced area in 1880, Chicago was elevated to the Archdiocese of Chicago, which reported no baptized Native American Catholics in 1900, but 1,500 in 1999. The Chicago Archdiocese and its predecessors administered the following American Indian ministries in Illinois:

|                                  |   |
|----------------------------------|---|
| 1821-1833                        | Fort Dearborn (Métis and Potawatomi)  |
| 1833-ca. 1840 (no longer Indian) | St. Mary Church (Métis and Potawatomi), Chicago   |
| 1883-1884                        | St. Mary Training School (Santee and/or Sisseton and Wahpeton), Feehanville [near Des Plaines]  |
| 1912-1930s                       | Rev. Georges P. Mathieu (Potawatomi, 1912-1996), Chicago-born and raised who attended seminary there, later served as a priest of the Diocese of La Crosse, Wisconsin |
| 1952-1982                        | Chicago Archdiocesan American Indian apostolate (various)   |
| 1982-present                     | St. Kateri/ Anawim Center (various), Chicago  |

Holdings of Catholic-related records about Native Americans include sacramental records for (Old) St. Mary Church and school records for St. Mary Training School. Fort Dearborn and Old St. Mary Church had been served by Reverends Gabriel Richard and John Mary Irenæus St. Cyr. Parishioners included Chief Billy Caldwell [Sauganash] (Potawatomi), 1780-1841).