



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

Diocese of Bismarck
NORTH DAKOTA, RICHARDTON

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Benedictines,

Assumption Abbey Archives

M-135

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Richardton, North Dakota 58652
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<http://www.assumptionabbey.com/>

Open: By appointment only
Access: Some restrictions apply
Copying facilities: Yes

History: The Benedictines founded Assumption in 1893, which was elevated to an abbey in 1903. Assumption Abbey has administered the following Arickara, Hidatsa, and Mandan Indian missions and parishes on the Fort Berthold Reservation in North Dakota:

1889-1969 (closed)	Immaculate Conception/ Sacred Heart Mission, Packineau Dam Site/ Elbowoods
1906-1969 (closed)	St. Andrew Mission, Nishu/ Armstrong
1906-1969 (closed)	Holy Family/ St. Michael Mission, Shell Creek/ Shell Village
1907-1921 (closed)	St. John Mission, Crow Heart's Landing
1911-present	St. Anthony Church, Mandaree/ Independence
1928-present	St. Joseph Mission, Twin Buttes/ Crow's Heart
1955-1970 (closed)	Queen of Peace Mission, Raub
1963-present	Sacred Heart Mission, White Shield

Holdings of Catholic-related records about Native Americans:

Inclusive dates: 1815-present, n.d.

Volume: Approximately 5 cubic feet

Description: 4 series include Native Catholic records:

/1 "Parishes"

Inclusive dates: 1887-present, n.d.

Volume: 1 cubic foot, 1 reel of microfilm, and 3 audiotapes

Description: Indian mission records are found in the "Fort Berthold Reservation Records":

- A. Correspondence, 1887-1913, 1915-1916, 1919, 1922, 1925-1931, 1933-1934, 1936-1937, 1951-1952, 1955, 1958-1959, .3 cubic foot: Major correspondents include Reverends Leon Favreau, Paul Lotter, Peter Fehrenbach, O.S.B., Reinhard Kaufmann, O.S.B., Aloysius Bittman, O.S.B., Bishops Vincent Wehrle and John Shanley, and the Bureau of Catholic Indian Missions and U.S. Bureau of Indian Affairs; approximately one-third of the letters are copies from other collections, most notably from the Bureau of Catholic Indian Missions Records, now Marquette University, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, and the Diocese of Fargo
- B. Financial records, 1913-present, .2 cubic foot: Primarily annual financial reports
- C. Audiotapes, 1975, 3 tapes: Reverend John Odermann interviewing his mother, Re: Sacred Heart Mission, Reverend Francis M. Craft, and the Congregation of American Sisters (Hunkpapa)
- D. Photographs, 1910-present, n.d., 340 prints
- E. Mission publication, *Smoke Signals*, 1969-1971, 1 folder
- F. Histories and historical notes, 1940s-1970s, .2 cubic foot: most of the historical notes are written by Reverend Louis Pfaller; includes the first draft of Reverend Pfaller's thesis, "Catholic Missionaries and the Fort Berthold Indians before 1889"
- G. Sacramental records, 1889-1968, 1 reel of microfilm: baptisms, 1889-1968, marriages, 1892-1967, deaths, 1918-1942, 1951-1968, first communions, 1955-1967, and confirmations, 1929-1967

/2 "Members"

Inclusive dates: 1914-1970s, n.d.

Volume: Approximately 2 cubic feet and several reels of microfilm

Description: Arranged alphabetically by surname.

- A. Berheide, Reverend Edward, O.S.B., 1941-1954, .1 cubic foot:
 - 1. Scrapbooks containing form letters sent to benefactors, 1941-1951, 1 volume
 - 2. Lists of "begging letters" sent, 1945-1954, 1 folder: includes date, amount received, and number of masses said
- B. Fehrenbach, Reverend Peter, O.S.B., 1914-1930, n.d., .2 cubic foot:
 - 1. Correspondence, 1915-1917, 1919-1920, 1922, 1924-1925, 1927, 1929, 3 folders: major correspondents include Bishops Vincent Wehrle and Vincent J. Ryan and Reverend Martin Kenel, O.S.B.
 - 2. Journal, 1914-1921, 1 volume
 - 3. Photographs, n.d., 6 prints
 - 4. Biographical and personal records, n.d., 1 folder
- C. Kaufmann, Reverend Reinhard, O.S.B., 1931-1970s, n.d., .5 cubic foot:
 - 1. Correspondence, 1931-1972, 1 folder: to and from Abbots Alcuin Deutsch, O.S.B. and Cuthbert Goeb, O.S.B.
 - 2. Biographical notes, n.d., 1 folder
 - 3. Photographs, 1930s-1970s, 1,250 photos: Indian and family related
- D. Pfaller, Reverend Louis, O.S.B., 1940s-1970s, approximately 1.2 cubic feet and several reels of microfilm: primarily Reverend Pfaller's writings, his research notes, and copies of records he generated or collected; prominent items or topics include a partial copy of the *Soeurs grises Chronicle* for the Fort Totten Agency Schools, notes on the Fort Berthold Reservation, the "Roy Johnson Collection" of records relating to the Red River Valley, notes and copies of publications pertaining to Reverend Pierre-Jean de Smet, S.J., microfilm copies of federal Indian agency records obtained from the U.S. National Archives, and a manuscript copy of his book *James McLaughlin, The Man with an Indian Heart*

/3 "North Dakota - Ecclesiastical"

Inclusive dates: 1815-1880

Volume: 1 cubic foot (2,200 pages), or 3 reels of microfilm

Description: Contains the "Reverend Julius M. Belleau Collection," which includes records assembled by Reverend Belleau while pastor of Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary Church, Pembina, North Dakota, 1934-1947. The majority of the records are typescripts of correspondence (majority in French) of French Canadian missionaries in the Red River Valley among the Métis and Ojibwa Indians. The typescripts are arranged chronologically, and the majority are preceded by a table of contents and Reverend Belleau's summary in English of each letter. Major correspondents include Reverends Severe Joseph Nicholas Dumoulin, Joseph Norbert Provencher, Georges Antoine Belcourt, Joseph Goiffon, J. Lafleche, Lawrence Simonet, and Jean Baptiste M. Genin, O.M.I., Bishops Joseph-Octave Plessis, and Alexander-Antonine Taché, O.M.I., and Joseph Rolette. In addition to the correspondence, the collection includes a baptismal register for Assumption Mission, Pembina, 1858-1862, created by Reverend Joseph Goiffon; historical notes by Reverend Julius Belleau; and biographies of Reverends Joseph Goiffon and Georges Belcourt. Reverend Belleau copied these records from the Archives of the Archidiocèses de Québec (Quebec, Quebec, Canada) and Sainte Boniface (Sainte Boniface, Manitoba, Canada) and then donated the collection to Assumption Abbey in 1956.

/4 "North Dakota - Secular"

Inclusive dates: 1876-1920

Volume: Approximately .3 cubic foot

Description: "Major James McLaughlin Papers," which include approximately 300 letters pertaining to Catholic Indian missions and schools, written primarily while McLaughlin was agent of the Fort Totten and Standing Rock Reservations. Major correspondents include Bishop Martin Marty, O.S.B., Reverends John Baptist A. Brouillet, Director of the Bureau of Catholic Indian Missions, Joseph A. Stephan, Indian Agent and later Director of the Bureau of Catholic Indian Missions, Martin Kenel, O.S.B., Claude Ebner, O.S.B., Francis M. Craft, and Louis Bonin, and Sister Clapin, S.G.N.