

Permanent Parish Records

Diocese of Springfield in Illinois

Sacramental Records	<p>The Diocese of Springfield in Illinois requires that sacramental records be recorded on paper in bound volumes. Parishes are allowed to use electronic sacramental records management programs, <i>but they must maintain the paper copies of each register.</i></p> <p>Under no circumstances are original copies of sacramental registers to be discarded. If the parish is unable to care for the records for any reason, the records can be moved to the diocesan archives for permanent retention.</p>
Pre-nuptial Investigations	All pre-nuptial investigation files should be kept permanently.
Parish Seal	The parish seal should be kept permanently.
Canonical Documents	<p>Documents detailing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The establishment of the parish; • Parish boundaries; and • Documentation relating to the closing of the parish.
Histories	<p>Published or non-published items that describe the history of the parish or document important events in the parish's history. Includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jubilee/dedication booklets and programs; • Articles about the parish; • Parish histories; and • History of priests or parish members.
Parish Administration	<p>Documents and correspondence regarding the administration of the parish. Includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Correspondence with the Bishop and/or chancery officials; • Documents and correspondence regarding parish school administration; • Parish calendars; • Parish bulletins; • Membership lists or censuses; • Parish annual reports; and • Meeting minutes.
Parish Organizations	<p>These should be organized in files by the name of the organization:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Articles of Incorporation, Constitution, and Bylaws; • Meeting minutes; • Lists of members and officers; • Financial reports; • Correspondence; • Publications (Flyers, newsletters, etc.); and • Records of special events.

Photographs	<p>Photos should be labeled for easy identification. Label the backs of photos in pencil or acid-free pen.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Photographs of the interior/exterior of church building; • Priests appointed at parish (with names); • Parish organizations (with names, if possible); • Special events; and • Parish schools.
Financial Records	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Account books and ledgers; • Insurance policies; • Trust/estate/endowment correspondence and files; • Annual financial reports; • Annual budgets; • Pension records; and • Audit reports. <p><i>Please note:</i> there are other financial records that need to be kept permanently – this is just a sample of some of the general financial records found at parishes.</p>
School Information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student transcripts; • School histories; • Yearbooks; and • Information on students' families.
Legal Documents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Articles of Incorporation of Parish; • Deeds to parish property; • Contracts, invoices, paid bills, etc. for construction projects; • Other contracts and leases; • Blueprints; • Tax reports; and • Records regarding court cases in which the parish is involved.
Miscellaneous	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Artifacts of historical value.

Tips for Good Record-Keeping:

- 1. Date everything:** Every letter, document, parish bulletin, set of minutes, photograph, etc. should have a complete date, including year.
- 2. File wisely:** Avoid interfiling permanent records (e.g. annual financial reports) with items that will eventually be destroyed (e.g. cancelled checks). This will allow for the easy destruction of the non-permanent items when their retention period is complete.
- 3. When in doubt, ask the archivist:** The Director of Archives and Records Management for the diocese is always happy to answer any questions you may have about parish records. The office can be reached at 217.698.8500 ext. 170.