COLLABORATIVE DIGITIZATION OF PARISH HISTORIES

COLLECTIONS COMMITTEE

BACKGROUND

- Since 2015, CRRA has sought a digitization project that its members could work on collaboratively

- Parish histories were selected because they are commonly held across our member institutions

- The Collections Committee has been working to advance this project
  - Goal: To encourage and enable CRRA members to prioritize the digitization of parish histories so as to build a comprehensive collection of these resources in the Catholic Portal

2016 SURVEY

- In the spring of 2016, a survey was sent to the Liaisons Council to determine their institutions' likeliness to participate in the parish histories project
- Survey received 27 responses

RESULTS OF THE SURVEY

- **100%** of respondents agreed that parish histories belong in the Catholic Portal

- **66.7%** of respondents said that their institutions hold parish histories

- **5.6%** of respondents said that their parish histories were discoverable in the Catholic Portal

- **88.2%** of respondents indicated that they would be interested in "building a collaborative parish history collection in the Catholic Portal"

ACTIVITIES OF 2016-2017

- Collections Committee has explored how this project might proceed
- Biggest hurdle: copyright concerns
  - Many parish histories were published after 1923, so they're not in public domain
  - It's unclear who exactly holds copyright for many histories – the parish? The publishing company? Someone else?
  - Collections Committee wanted to get a sense of how our member institutions handle copyright issues, so held a meeting with the Liaisons Council

JUNE 14 LIAISONS COUNCIL MEETING

- Takeaways:
  - Written policies specifically about copyright are rare; instead, copyright checks are often embedded into the digitization process
  - Some institutions allow items with known copyright status to be accessible on general Internet, while items with unknown copyright status are available only on campus or even in just the library itself
  - Reaching out to copyright holders is very difficult
    - Difficult to find correct holders
    - Often receive no reply

IMPLICATIONS FOR THE PARISH HISTORIES PROJECT

- We encourage our members to upload parish history catalog records into the Portal

- Starting digitization with pre-1923 histories may be a good choice
  - Individual institutions can then use their own discretion regarding if/when they're comfortable with adding more recent materials

- Members are interested in using the CRRA website to share digitization best practices and workflows, and as a sounding board for copyright questions/concerns

- The Collections Committee plans to host a future webinar for the general membership of CRRA to introduce the project and talk about copyright issues