



Catholic Research Resources Alliance

CRRA Update October 2012

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Please Join Us for a Sneak Preview of the CRRA Updated Website

Max Tolomei and I cordially invite you to attend a sneak preview of the updated and soon-to-be-released CRRA website. Max and I have been working to move the CRRA website's content into the open source content management system, Concrete5, while re-evaluating the organization and function of the website as a whole. Concrete5 will bring our site into the 21st century, making it possible to dynamically update content, and allow members to easily collaborate and share project information in a variety of ways.

We invite your input into how the site works for you and how it might be improved. Max and I will be hosting two one-hour webinars to demo the site. Please plan to join us for one of these sessions.

Demo of CRRA website and discussion:

**Friday, November 2 at 12:00 noon
Eastern time (11 central, 9 pacific)**
or
**Thursday, November 8 at 12:00
noon Eastern time (11 central, 9
pacific)**



Sessions will include a live demo of the site and comments and suggestions from you (via text chat and/or telephone).

To participate, please email Max (mtolomei@nd.edu) or Pat (plawton@nd.edu) for login information.

We look forward to showing you the website and hearing your suggestions for improvements.

-- Pat Lawton and Max Tolomei

CRRA Collections Spotlight: New Jersey Catholic Historical Commission Newsletter Digitization Project: An Introduction, by Alan Delozier

The New Jersey Catholic Historical Commission is an organization formed in 1976, and designed to promote the archival and documentary work of religious history within the Garden State from the mid-seventeenth century to the present day. The focus of this organization encompasses research advocacy, publishing initiatives, conference planning, and various other activities designed to bring awareness to the value of Catholic history in its many forms.

In line with this mission and the value of wider appreciation of our unique resources, we have neared completion of the digitization of our newsletter archive including the original – *New Jersey Catholic Historical Records Commission Newsletter* (1979-2001), and its successor known as *The Recorder* (2008-present). Articles about a number of different topics including parish life, higher education, chaplains, and women religious are a few of the subjects featured as they relate to important chapters in the context of church and state history. Abstracts and full text copies of these issues can presently be found via our homepage - <http://blogs.shu.edu/njchc/commission-works-and-activities/newsletters/> along with other relevant information about the organization.

This project has been undertaken by our associate, Ms. Sarah Beth Seymore, who has also done a tremendous job not only in scanning these publications, but updating our overall website. The exciting potential collaborations between the NJCHC and the CRRA promises to yield a beneficial information exchange in the days ahead along with our direct link to charter member Seton Hall University where our archival collections and administrative offices are located. We also encourage individuals to become Friends of the Commission and receive the latest news about the NJCHC and become more involved in our ongoing activities. To review our site and to access further information please feel free to consult our homepage at - <http://blogs.shu.edu/njchc/>.

Alan Delozier

*Director, Archives & Special Collections Center and CRRA Collections Committee Member
Seton Hall University Libraries*



Re-indexing EAD Files

“The Catholic Portal is essentially an index of two types of metadata: 1) records describing individual and discrete items, and 2) records describing collections of individual items. For the most part, the former metadata records are MARC records describing books. The later are EAD files describing the holdings of archives.” – ([July 23, 2012 blog post by Eric Morgan](#)).

As described in the July 23 post, Eric originally parsed the header of EAD files complete with all of its rich controlled vocabulary terms. The end result was deep indexing resulting in discovery of discrete items within collections – for example, a Dorothy Day letter was discovered within the *Papers of John Brophy Collection*, which were not previously discoverable within the portal. The success in indexing was marked, though a new problem arose in the display of results. Search results for Dorothy Day retrieved an overwhelming number of records of folder and series-levels descriptions from within a collection. Displays were seemingly redundant and confusing to the user. The new challenge became – how to retain the deep indexing and retrieve results that provided the user with a manageable set of records, preferably at the collection level?

In an Oct. 9, 2012 blog post, Eric Morgan (ND) reports on his recent work on re-indexing EAD files. For more, please see: <http://www.catholicresearch.net/blog/2012/10/indexing-again/>.

Sincere thanks to Eric for his good work on EAD and to the Digital Access Committee for their continued support and guidance.

DePaul Hosts Catholic Research Resources Alliance Symposium

On October 15 – 16, 2012, DePaul University hosted the annual Catholic Research Resources Alliance (CRRA) Symposium, “Nurturing the ‘Spirit of Perfect Charity’: Libraries and Archives at the Intersection of Service and Scholarship in Catholic Social Justice Studies.”

DePaul University President Dennis H. Holtschneider, C. M., welcomed almost 100 Symposium attendees from institutions across the United States and abroad with his thoughts on the unique character of the Catholic commitment to social justice and the role of libraries and archives in promoting the work of those who study it. “Libraries and archives,” Fr. Holtschneider concluded, “enable scholars, enable voices to be heard, enable people to be moved . . .”



The 2012 CRRA Symposium focused on the study of Catholic Social Justice, and highlighted relevant collections at DePaul University, Loyola University of Chicago, Marquette University, and others. The Symposium also included discussion of the CRRA’s Catholic Newspapers Project and the integration of special collections materials in undergraduate education, including the use by DePaul University Professor Susan Dumbleton’s of the papers of Sr. Helen Prejean in her course, “Dead Man Walking: An American Story.” The Symposium also included a keynote address by DePaul’s Michael Baxter, Visiting Associate Professor of Catholic Studies, and a viewing and discussion of the film, “A Question of Habit”

<<http://www.questionofhabit.com/>> with Loyola University of Chicago Professor of Communication Bren Ortega Murphy.

The 2012 Catholic Research Resources Alliance Symposium was co-sponsored by the DePaul University Library, the DePaul University Office of Mission and Values, and by the CRRA. (Read the full story [here](#).)

--Scott Walter, University Librarian, DePaul University

On behalf of the CRRA, sincere thanks to the DePaul team who hosted this event and to all who participated as speakers, as poster presenters, as attendees. Thank you all for making this a worthwhile and memorable event. Special thanks to Scott Walter, University Librarian and to (left to right, below) Morgen MacIntosh Hodgetts, Geoffrey Pettys, and Andrew Rea.



Upcoming Events



Might be of interest ...

2012 Chicago Colloquium on Digital Humanities & Computer Science

When: November 17-20, 2012

Where: The University of Chicago

More info at: <http://chicagocolloquium.org/>

CRRA Update is an electronic newsletter distributed via email to provide members with an update of CRRA activities. Please contact Pat at 574.631.1324 or email plawton@nd.edu with your questions, comments, or news to share.