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**CRRA Catholic Newspapers Task Force**

**Thursday, March 15, 2012**

**11:00 a.m. Eastern / 10:00 a.m. Central**

Call: 1-866-469-3239 Attendee access code: 219 864 93

**Agenda and Minutes**

**Present:** Noel, Jean, Steven, Darren, Pat,Malachy, Jennifer, Shawn, Susan

1. Welcome, Jean and Shawn

Shawn was asked to introduce himself to the group: PAHRC, Shawn is interested in TF as PAHRC has very large collection of newspapers. Nothing is yet digitized - Truth Teller, Catholic Herald digitized through Villanova’s program. Cait and Shawn are working with Villanova to begin digitizing Philadelphia Catholic newspapers.

1. Updates:
   1. OSV visit

March 5, Jean and Pat visited Our Lady of Victory Noll (OLV) Archives and the OSV. They gained a good sense of the OLV’s Missionary Catechist as a document of the Sisters’ activities. Securing permissions would not be a problem.

En route to OLVN, they met with and drove to Huntington with Janice Cantrell, FWSB Archivist. Janice indicated that our Bishop Kevin Rhoades is interested in digitizing newspapers. Good sign for pursuing OSV grant.

The group encouraged us to think more about funding from the religious congregation, many are cash rich but resources poor.

1. Discuss the Task Force draft statement of the scope of the newspapers project:

The mandate of the CRRA Newspaper Taskforce is:

·        to encourage the digitization of  Catholic newspapers by CRRA members and non-members;

·        to create an online searchable *Directory of North American Catholic Newspapers* in order to increase accessibility and use of digitized materials by scholars and to identify print and microfilmed newspapers still in need of digitization;

·        to create a digital repository of Catholic newspapers which will also include links to other sites.

The Taskforce works with any digitization partner, but particularly encourages the digitization of national Catholic newspapers and diocesan newspapers.

The directory and the digital repository will include any newspaper published in North America with a significant Catholic connection (regardless of language). In addition to national and diocesan newspapers, they will include newspapers published by self-identified Catholic groups (religious orders and congregations, missionary societies, university and college groups, lay organizations, etc.)

DISCUSSION  
Jennifer: TF is gaining momentum, thought it would be interesting to touch base about the focus of the group.

Noel identified questions – is this what TF members signed on to do and is this what you are here for?

Shawn: complete a list of what is where. Do we have complete runs of papers? To me, first is identifying what’s out there and where it is. How make it accessible by digitizing? How do it? Large grant, regionally … distributed vs. centralized model for digitization. Once we know what we have, how best to begin digitizing.

Darren: Having the record of extant and already digitized, increasingly we don’t want to duplicate efforts. Getting the list and two parallel tracks and identifying what is out there.

Malachy: added to TF, emphasis on facilitating and assisting member and non-member institutions to obtain grants. CRRA as clearinghouse for projects and grants. CLA is interested in creating a union list of serials. What is reflective of Catholic publishing? That is a parallel track. Need representatives in every region, we have limited knowledge of what’s out there. Two complementary scopes: digitization and directory.

Jean: ND has many newspapers largely in microfilm, would like to include those. Agree need to see what is out there. What standards do we need to encourage people to apply?

Darren: Malachy on grant clearinghouse idea, agree it is very important. All Villanova’s work has been institution-supported and we realize what a luxury it is. Access is difficult for many, VU is reaching a critical mass for partnerships. ID grants out there, where funding is, connecting use and funds, and work to be done.

Noel: CRRA emphasis on freely accessible. Need to distinguish between what is digitized and what is freely available.

Malachy: important point and one that crra might have a statement on.

Steven: At this point, valuable to have event or meeting and invite other groups, show what we have and coordinate with local collections. Also, a web presence to showcase what we have.

Pat: hiring a student this summer to concrete5, will have student begin to showcase the work of the TF. Concrete5 is an open source content management system suggested by Demian Katz of Villanova.

Jennifer: prospectus to Mellon, were thinking to do survey to see who has what. What’s freely accessible, not. CRRA as an organization could go out for money to do this. Prototype a directory then a repository. Darren’s plea for a shared repository. Parallel is to coordinate encourage and support individual digitizing efforts. A framework for supporting digitization efforts and a shared repository, online directory.

NEH grant would entail hiring someone to take the lead in doing this. How much we can do on our own is a good question.

Noel: grants, standards, freely accessible issue.

Shawn: step one is a master list of what’s where, format. Priorities, then most rare, fragile. Film might be cheaper, but challenges of OCR.

Steven: priority set as digitizing print where available for quality standards.

Malachy: concern for sources that get your name out there. First concern is big names, what will be used – OCD for example. The New World in Chicago is very important as a source, but impossible to use. Major diocesan papers would yield a renaissance of scholarship. Providing a means of getting new scholarship to understand literature and history.

Noel: Another factor is what we can get funding for. That often determines things. We will do what a donor will pay for.

Malachy: Catholic Funding Guide, we are creating a book review index for CLW but many foundations in Illlinois that would look at this. Under education. Again, if we have a clearinghouse and point them to key foundations.

Shawn: a master list is important, not just at state level. Philadelphia has Illinois papers.

Jennifer: how arrive at a master list?

Shawn: time consuming task. An individual or by region.

Jennifer: what we call “an environmental scan.”

Malachy: we’ve done up to 1957. It’s on my computer. What is officially recognized as a Catholic newspaper by the Bishop.

Willging did 19th century, very extensive.

Shawn surprised when he has seen things they missed. Things Catholic and things construed as Catholic.

Malachy: must consider use.

Shawn value of master list, can identify groups, say, Polish newspapers. Can we find someone to fund digitizing Polish newspapers?

Jennifer: strategic plan in March update. Question of limit of pursuing our vision in North America or in the Americas. Board and strategic planning TF opted for “in the Americas” with understanding that that is long-term, immediate focus on North America. Year five go beyond US and Canada.

Noel: crra members outside US or Canada?

Jennifer: no, nor are we recruiting. Membership group will address.

Darren: Willging is exclusively US, does include Ukrainian, Polish, etc.

Noel: funding the scan. Funding from many sources?

Steven: combination of contributing via website, or kickstarter with limited funding and get groups to fund. Set benchmarks, means of doing it except with just grants. Leveraging the community is where the strengths lie.

Noel – scan is six figures, to an organization that is relatively new.

Jennifer: capacity limited to Pat, Jennifer, students as we have them. Community leveraging is great idea with TF as coordinating body with redesigned website. If someone other than Pat or ND said I could get an assistant to spend a couple months getting a list set up with all datapoints we want, if we define how to do the list in small pieces. Requires building a framework and database to which people could contribute. Supports idea of leveraging community.

1. Discuss OSV and NEH proposals: Framework of individual newspaper digitizing activities and CRRA goal to create an online directory & repository.
2. Next meeting date: Thursday, March 2? 11:00 am eastern, 10:00 am central