

REPORT OF THE DIOCESAN ARCHIVIST

It is important to remind all members of the diocese of Niagara of the Canon 2.6 regarding Archives and Archivists.

It states in part:

“The diocese shall maintain an Archive to acquire and preserve records of historical significance in the life of the church in the diocese, and where appropriate, to make these records available. The Archives shall be located at the division of Archives and Research Collections, McMaster University Library in accordance with a memorandum of agreement between McMaster University library and the diocese of Niagara in 1975.

The Archivist is appointed by the Bishop and expenses necessary for the purpose of this Canon shall be provided for in the Diocesan Budget.

The Archivist shall receive from each congregation completed Parish Registers, minute books and records of Parish committees, organizations and officers having continuing value for historical use or as a matter of record for transfer to the Diocesan Archives.” I encourage each parish to have an archivist responsible for observing and maintaining this Canon. Please give me such names, addresses and phone numbers for my records.

I keep an index of all parish records kept at McMaster. Each parish should have this on file. An extra copy can be supplied if needed simply by contacting the Diocesan Archivist. Copies of Baptism, Marriage and Burial Registers are made and returned to the parish in due time. Budget and staff reductions at McMaster slow this process a bit. Be patient and be assured I have access to all these Registers and can retrieve information when required.

Many people are interested in researching family histories and look to parish records for information. Sometimes this information goes back further than parish records reveal. I recommend the Ontario Genealogical Society as a good source for family information.

The work on a Stained Glass Registry of every parish in the Diocese has slowed down a bit due to staff changes. If you have supplied us with digital photos of all your church windows complete with accurate documentation of the dedications of each window—thank you for this. If someone with a good camera could do this it would help us greatly. This registry is also important for your insurance information. These pictures can be a source for making Christmas cards or gift cards.

Two important booklets are available from the Archivist. One is “Archives—Our Story” and details what should be kept and for how long. The other one is “Stained Glass Care” (no Windex please!).

And finally—as penmanship is not taught in schools these days—please print your name clearly on all parish registers where required then sign.

I thank Ruth Anne Martin for being my technical-computer assistant for a number of years. This work has been taken over by Beth Gould.

Respectfully submitted,
The Venerable John Rathbone