



Title	<b>Fr. James Colleran Papers</b>
Classification	<b>History Records - Finding Aid</b>
Owner	<b>Colleran, James A. (Rev.)</b>
Begin Date	<b>01/01/1937</b>
End Date	<b>12/31/2015</b>
Bulk Dates (YYYY-YYYY)	<b>1963-2011</b>
Processor	<b>Heinrich, Charles</b>
Accession Number	<b>201528102</b>
Date Created	<b>01/19/2024</b>
Number of Boxes	<b>3</b>
Security	<b>Staff Access, Archives</b>
Collection Language(s)	<b>English; Spanish</b>

### Biographical/Administrative History

James Colleran was born in 1937 in Chicago to Bernard and Elizabeth Colleran. Growing up in Rogers Park and attending St. Ignatius School, James entered Quigley Preparatory Seminary and later went on to St. Mary of the Lake Seminary in Mundelein. During his time at Mundelein he became increasingly involved in the intersection of theology and labor activism, and even went out to New York to meet with Dorothy Day. He was ordained to the priesthood by Albert Cardinal Meyer in 1963. His first assignment was St. Bonaventure parish.

In 1969, Fr. Colleran and other priests were selected by John Cardinal Cody to travel to Puerto Rico to learn Spanish in order to better serve the city's growing Latino population. When Fr. Jim returned, he was appointed pastor of St. Vitus parish in Pilsen, which would begin a long priestly career of Latino ministry and activism.

While pastor at St. Vitus, Fr. Colleran was one of the founders of the Asociación pro Derechos Obreros, (Association for Workers' Rights), a labor activist group committed to increasing Latino representation in the workforce. The A.P.O. blockaded CTA buses in 1972 to force the city to hire more Spanish-speaking bus drivers. In 1976, a deadly fire broke out near St. Vitus due to poor living conditions, and the damage was exacerbated by a lack of Spanish-speaking firemen. Fr. Jim and the parishioners of Vitus and nearby parishes responded by organizing the city's first Via Crucis, a living Passion Play that has become a continuing tradition for Latinos in the city of Chicago.

Fr. Jim would continue to serve in Hispanic parishes after his time at St. Vitus. In 1995, he would go on a mission trip and minister to poor farmers in Quechultenango, Mexico. He would retire in 2007, pursuing a lifelong interest and passions in painting. Fr. Colleran passed away in 2018 at the age of 81.

To learn more about Fr. Colleran's life, check out the Archives and Records Center's digital exhibit on the collection: <https://archives.archchicago.org/photo-exhibit/fr-james-colleran>

### Provenance

The material from this collection was donated to the Archives and Records Center by Fr. Colleran in 2015 (accession# 201528102). The historical materials were then later processed and organized by Processing Archivist Charles Heinrich.

### Separations

One oversize folder of 3 photographs are in HIST/P2900/453.

## Scope and Content

This collection consists of 3 archival boxes and one oversize folder with a total volume of 1.5 cubic feet.

The largest series in this collection is made up of the various collected personal correspondence of Fr. James Colleran, which spans roughly the period of his seminary days in the 1960s up through his retirement years in the 2010s. This collection is mostly unsorted and not in chronological order.

The remainder of the collection consists of the assorted writings, research papers, and homilies by Fr. Colleran, and an archival box filled with photographs documenting his life, family, and ministry.

Notable pieces in this collection include Fr. Colleran's homilies and short stories, which display a rich warmth and personal style that demonstrates why he was well-loved in his parish assignments. Also of note are his letters, particularly of his experiences in Mexico while serving villagers in the remote countryside.

## Series Description

Series 1: Personal Correspondence (1960s-2014) - Box 1

Series 2: Writings and Homilies (1956-2011) - Box 2

Series 3: Various Historical Documents and Materials (1937-2015) - Box 2

Series 4: Historical Photographs (1937-2015) - Box 3

## Contacts

Colleran, James A. (Rev.)

## Box List

Box	Record Number	HIST/H3300/416	Classification	History Records - Historical Records
Title (Free Text Part)	<b>Personal Writings and Historical Materials</b>			
Begin Date	<b>01/01/1960</b>	End Date	<b>10/01/2015</b>	DB Box Number <b>32626.02</b>

Folder	Record Number	HIST/H3300/416#1	Classification	History Records - Personal Papers
Title (Free Text Part)	<b>Research Papers</b>			
Begin Date	<b>01/01/1960</b>	End Date	<b>12/31/1985</b>	DB Box Number <b>32626.02</b>

Folder	Record Number	HIST/H3300/416#2	Classification	History Records - Homilies and Sermons
Title (Free Text Part)	<b>Various Homilies</b>			
Begin Date	<b>01/01/1956</b>	End Date	<b>12/31/2011</b>	DB Box Number <b>32626.02</b>

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<b>Folder</b>	Record Number	<b>HIST/H3300/416#3</b>	Classification	<b>History Records - Homilies and Sermons</b>
Title (Free Text Part)	<b>Various Homilies</b>			
Begin Date	<b>01/01/1966</b>	End Date	<b>12/31/2013</b>	DB Box Number <b>32626.02</b>

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<b>Folder</b>	Record Number	<b>HIST/H3300/416#4</b>	Classification	<b>History Records - Personal Papers</b>
Title (Free Text Part)	<b>Miscellaneous Writings</b>			
Begin Date	<b>01/01/1960</b>	End Date	<b>12/31/2011</b>	DB Box Number <b>32626.02</b>

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<b>Folder</b>	Record Number	<b>HIST/H3300/416#5</b>	Classification	<b>Personnel Records - Sabbatical Files</b>
Title (Free Text Part)	<b>Sabbatical Paperwork and Florence Academy of Arts</b>			
Begin Date	<b>01/01/1993</b>	End Date	<b>12/31/1995</b>	DB Box Number <b>32626.02</b>

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<b>Folder</b>	Record Number	<b>HIST/H3300/416#6</b>	Classification	<b>History Records - Historical Records</b>
Title (Free Text Part)	<b>Art Miscellany</b>			
Begin Date	<b>01/01/1977</b>	End Date	<b>12/31/2007</b>	DB Box Number <b>32626.02</b>

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<b>Folder</b>	Record Number	<b>HIST/H3300/416#7</b>	Classification	<b>Administrative Records - Program Booklet</b>
Title (Free Text Part)	<b>Covered Bridge Art Association</b>			
Begin Date	<b>01/01/2001</b>	End Date	<b>12/31/2013</b>	DB Box Number <b>32626.02</b>

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<b>Folder</b>	Record Number	<b>HIST/H3300/416#8</b>	Classification	<b>History Records - Historical Records</b>
Title (Free Text Part)	<b>Priest Placement and Evaluations</b>			
Begin Date	<b>01/01/1980</b>	End Date	<b>12/31/1989</b>	DB Box Number <b>32626.02</b>

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<b>Folder</b>	Record Number	<b>HIST/H3300/416#9</b>	Classification	<b>History Records - Historical Records</b>
Title (Free Text Part)	<b>Class Reunion Materials</b>			
Begin Date	<b>01/01/1991</b>	End Date	<b>12/31/2006</b>	DB Box Number <b>32626.02</b>

<b>Folder</b>	Record Number	<b>HIST/H3300/416#10</b>	Classification	<b>History Records - Homilies and Sermons</b>	
Title (Free Text Part)	<b>Miscellaneous Family Eulogies and other Documents</b>				
Begin Date	<b>01/01/1990</b>	End Date	<b>12/31/2000</b>	DB Box Number	<b>32626.02</b>
<b>Folder</b>	Record Number	<b>HIST/H3300/416#11</b>	Classification	<b>History Records - Printed Material: Periodicals</b>	
Title (Free Text Part)	<b>Assorted Newspaper Clippings</b>				
Begin Date	<b>01/01/1960</b>	End Date	<b>12/31/2010</b>	DB Box Number	<b>32626.02</b>
<b>Folder</b>	Record Number	<b>HIST/H3300/416#12</b>	Classification	<b>History Records - Printed Material: Periodicals</b>	
Title (Free Text Part)	<b>Miscellaneous Articles/Fragments</b>				
Begin Date	<b>01/01/1980</b>	End Date	<b>12/31/2013</b>	DB Box Number	<b>32626.02</b>
<b>Folder</b>	Record Number	<b>HIST/H3300/416#13</b>	Classification	<b>History Records - Historical Records</b>	
Title (Free Text Part)	<b>Miscellany</b>				
Begin Date	<b>01/01/1960</b>	End Date	<b>12/31/1989</b>	DB Box Number	<b>32626.02</b>
<b>Box</b>	Record Number	<b>HIST/H3300/417</b>	Classification	<b>History Records - Historical Records</b>	
Title (Free Text Part)	<b>Personal Correspondence</b>				
Begin Date	<b>01/01/1960</b>	End Date	<b>10/01/2015</b>	DB Box Number	<b>32626.01</b>
<b>Folder</b>	Record Number	<b>HIST/H3300/417#1</b>	Classification	<b>Administrative Records - Correspondence Files</b>	
Title (Free Text Part)	<b>Personal Correspondence</b>				
Begin Date	<b>01/01/1960</b>	End Date	<b>12/31/1998</b>	DB Box Number	<b>32626.01</b>
<b>Folder</b>	Record Number	<b>HIST/H3300/417#2</b>	Classification	<b>Administrative Records - Correspondence Files</b>	
Title (Free Text Part)	<b>Personal Correspondence</b>				
Begin Date	<b>01/01/1960</b>	End Date	<b>12/31/1998</b>	DB Box Number	<b>32626.01</b>

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<b>Folder</b>	Record Number	<b>HIST/H3300/417#3</b>	Classification	<b>Administrative Records - Correspondence Files</b>
Title (Free Text Part)	<b>Personal Correspondence</b>			
Begin Date	<b>01/01/1960</b>	End Date	<b>12/31/2009</b>	DB Box Number <b>32626.01</b>

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<b>Folder</b>	Record Number	<b>HIST/H3300/417#4</b>	Classification	<b>Administrative Records - Correspondence Files</b>
Title (Free Text Part)	<b>Personal Correspondence</b>			
Begin Date	<b>01/01/2000</b>	End Date	<b>12/31/2014</b>	DB Box Number <b>32626.01</b>

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<b>Folder</b>	Record Number	<b>HIST/H3300/417#5</b>	Classification	<b>Administrative Records - Correspondence Files</b>
Title (Free Text Part)	<b>Letters from Santiago Apostol</b>			
Begin Date	<b>01/01/1995</b>	End Date	<b>12/31/1996</b>	DB Box Number <b>32626.01</b>

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<b>Folder</b>	Record Number	<b>HIST/H3300/417#6</b>	Classification	<b>Administrative Records - Correspondence Files</b>
Title (Free Text Part)	<b>Personal Correspondence - Emails</b>			
Begin Date	<b>01/01/2005</b>	End Date	<b>12/31/2009</b>	DB Box Number <b>32626.01</b>

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<b>Folder</b>	Record Number	<b>HIST/H3300/417#7</b>	Classification	<b>Administrative Records - Correspondence Files</b>
Title (Free Text Part)	<b>Personal - Incoming Letters</b>			
Begin Date	<b>01/01/1990</b>	End Date	<b>12/31/2008</b>	DB Box Number <b>32626.01</b>

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<b>Folder</b>	Record Number	<b>HIST/H3300/417#8</b>	Classification	<b>Administrative Records - Correspondence Files</b>
Title (Free Text Part)	<b>Correspondence related to Sr. Emelita Sobrepena</b>			
Begin Date	<b>01/01/2007</b>	End Date	<b>12/31/2008</b>	DB Box Number <b>32626.01</b>

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<b>Folder</b>	Record Number	<b>HIST/P2900/453#11</b>	Classification	<b>History Records - Photographs</b>
Title (Free Text Part)	<b>Oversize Photographs</b>			
Begin Date	<b>08/01/1977</b>	End Date	<b>06/30/1999</b>	DB Box Number <b>32468.01</b>

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<b>Box</b>	Record Number	<b>HIST/P2900/875</b>	Classification	<b>History Records - Photographs</b>
Title (Free Text Part)	<b>Fr. James Colleran</b>			
Begin Date	<b>01/01/1935</b>	End Date	<b>12/31/2015</b>	DB Box Number <b>32626.03</b>

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<b>Folder</b>	Record Number	<b>HIST/P2900/875#1</b>	Classification	<b>History Records - Photographs</b>
Title (Free Text Part)	<b>Family</b>			
Begin Date	<b>01/01/1940</b>	End Date	<b>12/31/2015</b>	DB Box Number <b>32626.03</b>

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<b>Folder</b>	Record Number	<b>HIST/P2900/875#2</b>	Classification	<b>History Records - Photographs</b>
Title (Free Text Part)	<b>Various School Photos</b>			
Begin Date	<b>01/01/1949</b>	End Date	<b>12/31/1963</b>	DB Box Number <b>32626.03</b>

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<b>Folder</b>	Record Number	<b>HIST/P2900/875#3</b>	Classification	<b>History Records - Photographs</b>
Title (Free Text Part)	<b>Photos of Fr. Jim Colleran</b>			
Begin Date	<b>01/01/1950</b>	End Date	<b>12/31/2015</b>	DB Box Number <b>32626.03</b>

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<b>Folder</b>	Record Number	<b>HIST/P2900/875#4</b>	Classification	<b>History Records - Photographs</b>
Title (Free Text Part)	<b>UAW Protest outside of Jewel-Osco</b>			
Begin Date	<b>01/01/1970</b>	End Date	<b>12/31/1979</b>	DB Box Number <b>32626.03</b>

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<b>Folder</b>	Record Number	<b>HIST/P2900/875#5</b>	Classification	<b>History Records - Photographs</b>
Title (Free Text Part)	<b>Miscellaneous Friends and Acquaintances</b>			
Begin Date	<b>01/01/1950</b>	End Date	<b>12/31/2015</b>	DB Box Number <b>32626.03</b>

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<b>Folder</b>	Record Number	<b>HIST/P2900/875#6</b>	Classification	<b>History Records - Photographs</b>
Title (Free Text Part)	<b>Art and Landscapes</b>			
Begin Date	<b>01/01/1980</b>	End Date	<b>12/31/2015</b>	DB Box Number <b>32626.03</b>