



Archdiocese of Chicago Archives & Records Center

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Title	Niles College Seminary Collection
Classification	History Records - Finding Aid
Owner	Niles College of Loyola University
Begin Date	01/01/1961
End Date	12/31/1994
Bulk Dates (YYYY-YYYY)	1961-1977
Processor	Heinrich, Charles
Accession Number	0
Date Created	01/18/2023
Number of Boxes	41
Security	Staff Access, Archives
Collection Language(s)	English

Biographical/Administrative History

Niles College Seminary began when Cardinal Albert Meyer reformed the seminary formation system in 1961 and established the University of St. Mary of the Lake Junior College Department. Prior to this, prospective priests would attend five years at Quigley Preparatory Seminary, followed by seven years of philosophy and theology at Mundelein Seminary. Instead, seminarians would now attend four years at Quigley, two years at the junior college, and six years at Mundelein. The site of the junior college was the former St. Hedwig Orphanage in Niles, Illinois, at Touhy and Harlem.

Fr. Eugene Lyons was selected as the first rector of the Junior College. Along with his faculty, he was tasked with formulating a curriculum, seminary rule, and administrative protocol for the fledgling seminary. These early years were extremely chaotic, as the Vatican II council began right after the college opened and threw many ideas and regulations into flux. Furthermore, the waves of social change and unrest throughout the 1960s in the nation, fueled by the Vietnam War, Civil Rights, and the counterculture, resulted in a student body that often questioned every rule and staged various forms of protest and action against what they saw as intransigent administration - as well as Cardinal John Cody, who frequently made his displeasure known to Fr. Lyons.

In 1968, at the request of the rector, the Junior College was transformed into a 4-year college seminary and renamed Niles College. Shortly thereafter Niles officially affiliated with Loyola University Chicago, with seminarians commuting from the seminary to take additional undergraduate classes on the Lakeshore Campus.

The seminary's student body was primarily recruited from the minor (high school) seminaries Quigley North and Quigley South. Students from outside the two were labeled administratively as "Specials." Over time, "Specials" constituted a larger percentage of the student body but never an outright majority. Niles College's rectors, professors, and administrators focused heavily on recruitment and retention which was a perennial issue in the college seminary system.

In 1992, Cardinal Joseph Bernardin, citing lowered enrollment and shifting demographic patterns, directed rector Fr. Clete Kiley to evaluate options for maintaining, reimagining, or closing the seminary. After a lengthy process of discernment, the rector and board decided that in order to keep the seminary, it would relocate from the Niles campus into a spare dormitory/classroom building in Loyola's Lakeshore Campus. In 1994, the move was made official and Niles College moved into Loyola's Campion Hall and was rechristened as St. Joseph

College Seminary, effectively ending Niles College as an institution.

The collection housed here at the archives documents the many ups and downs of Niles College and the attempts to shape a new type of student life for seminarians in the wake of Vatican II. Amid the administrative day-to-day functions of the seminary, the staff had a heightened awareness and focus on the formation process of young Catholic men into future priests, and how to balance this formation with a college lifestyle.

The rectors of Niles College were:

Eugene Lyons - 1961-1971

William Goedert - 1971-1976

Richard Saudis - 1977-1981

John Vlazny - 1981-1983

Robert McLaughlin - 1983-1989

John Cletus "Clete" Kiley - 1990-1994

Provenance

The material from this collection was acquired over the course of several accessions throughout the 1990s and 2011/2019. The first batch of files came during the latter days of Niles College, leading up to its rebranding as St. Joseph College Seminary and the closure of the Niles campus in 1994/1995. Later on, the Archives and Records Center received more Niles materials when St. Joseph College Seminary moved from its original location at Loyola University Chicago's Campion Hall to its own free-standing building in Rogers Park in 2011. Finally, when St. Joseph closed in 2019, some Niles files were mixed in and brought to the Archives with the St. Joe's material.

Scope and Content

This collection consists of 41 archival boxes with a total volume of appx. 16.75 linear sq. feet.

The largest series within the collection is made up the Rector's Log Books, which cover the period of Niles College's founding in 1960 up to 1981.

The remainder of the collection is made up of office and administrative files related to the managing of the seminary, self-evaluations and accreditation materials, faculty meeting minutes, printed materials and publications, some correspondence, and a smattering of audio recordings and photographs. The majority of the material covers the period through the 1960s through the 1980s, with a smaller subset focused on the final years of the college from 1991-1994.

Notable pieces in this collection the Rector's Logs, which provide an almost day-by-day account of the activities and happenings at the seminary, as well as acting as a scrapbook-like collection of other materials like photographs, correspondence, newspaper clippings, programs, and more. Also worth noting is an exhaustive seminary self-study conducted by Niles College in the late 1960s, which offers an in-depth look at the state of seminary education and formation at the time.

Series Description

Series 1: Rector's Log Books (1961-1981), Boxes 1-11

Series 2: Seminary Evaluations and Accreditations (1969-1993), Boxes 12-19

Series 3: Faculty Reports and Minutes (1960-1992), Boxes 20-24

Series 4: Office and Administrative Files (1961-1995), Boxes 25-31

Series 5: Printed and Published Materials (1963-1993), Boxes 32-37

Series 6: Correspondence (1961-1977), Boxes 38-39

Series 7: Audio and Visual Materials (1961-2001), Boxes 40-41

Box List

Box	Record Number	ADMN/A1350/3993	Classification	Administrative Records - Administrative Files
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Title (Free Text Part)	Rector's Office Files (P-W)
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Begin Date	01/01/1961	End Date	07/01/1994	DB Box Number	32643.08
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Box	Record Number	ADMN/A1350/48	Classification	Administrative Records - Administrative Files
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Title (Free Text Part)	Rector's Office Files (A-N)
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Begin Date	01/01/1961	End Date	07/01/1994	DB Box Number	32643.07
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Box	Record Number	ADMN/C5920/133	Classification	Administrative Records - Correspondence Files
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Title (Free Text Part)	Cardinal Meyer and Cody
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Begin Date	01/01/1961	End Date	12/31/1971	DB Box Number	32644.11
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Box	Record Number	ADMN/C5920/19	Classification	Administrative Records - Correspondence Files
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Title (Free Text Part)	Cardinal Cody
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Begin Date	02/25/1971	End Date	05/31/1977	DB Box Number	32644.12
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Box	Record Number	ADMN/M3300/101	Classification	Administrative Records - Minutes
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Title (Free Text Part)	Faculty Meeting Minutes
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Begin Date	01/01/1968	End Date	12/31/1993	DB Box Number	32643.05
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Box	Record Number	ADMN/M3300/102	Classification	Administrative Records - Minutes
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Title (Free Text Part)	Faculty/Student Meeting Minutes
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Begin Date	09/01/1966	End Date	12/31/1993	DB Box Number	32643.06
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Box	Record Number	ADMN/M3300/104	Classification	Administrative Records - Minutes
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Title (Free Text Part)	Faculty Meeting Reports
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Begin Date	01/01/1960	End Date	12/31/1966	DB Box Number	32643.02
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Box	Record Number	ADMN/M3300/105	Classification	Administrative Records - Minutes
Title (Free Text Part)		Faculty Meeting Reports		
Begin Date	01/01/1966	End Date	12/31/1969	DB Box Number 32643.03

Box	Record Number	ADMN/M3300/106	Classification	Administrative Records - Minutes
Title (Free Text Part)		Faculty Meeting Reports		
Begin Date	01/01/1969	End Date	12/31/1971	DB Box Number 32643.04

Box	Record Number	ADMN/N1700/19	Classification	Administrative Records - Newsletters
Title (Free Text Part)		Niles College		
Begin Date	04/01/1971	End Date	12/31/1993	DB Box Number 32644.07

Box	Record Number	ADMN/P7180/27	Classification	Administrative Records - Program Booklet
Title (Free Text Part)		Niles College		
Begin Date	01/01/1979	End Date	12/31/1974	DB Box Number 32644.09

Box	Record Number	ADMN/P7240/262	Classification	Administrative Records - Project Files
Title (Free Text Part)		Niles College Move/Closing		
Begin Date	01/01/1992	End Date	12/31/1995	DB Box Number 32644.04

Box	Record Number	FNCL/A6100/1	Classification	Financial Records - Appraisal Reports
Title (Free Text Part)		Property Appraisals		
Begin Date	01/01/1962	End Date	12/31/1968	DB Box Number 32644.03

Box	Record Number	FNCL/B8150/75	Classification	Financial Records - Budget Report
Title (Free Text Part)		Niles College		
Begin Date	01/01/1961	End Date	12/31/1990	DB Box Number 32644.02

Box	Record Number	HIST/A8100/121	Classification	History Records - Audio Recordings
Title (Free Text Part)		Administrative Records ~ Audio Recordings		
Begin Date	01/01/1961	End Date	12/31/1989	DB Box Number 32645.01

Box	Record Number	HIST/P2900/551	Classification	History Records - Photographs
Title (Free Text Part)	Niles College			
Begin Date	01/01/1961	End Date	12/31/2001	DB Box Number 32645.02
Box	Record Number	SCHL/R1700/12	Classification	School Records - Rector's Files
Title (Free Text Part)	Rector's Logs			
Begin Date	01/01/1960	End Date	12/31/1963	DB Box Number 32641.01
Box	Record Number	SCHL/R1700/13	Classification	School Records - Rector's Files
Title (Free Text Part)	Rector's Logs			
Begin Date	01/01/1963	End Date	05/30/1965	DB Box Number 32641.02
Box	Record Number	SCHL/R1700/14	Classification	School Records - Rector's Files
Title (Free Text Part)	Rector's Logs			
Begin Date	09/01/1965	End Date	05/30/1967	DB Box Number 32641.03
Box	Record Number	SCHL/R1700/15	Classification	School Records - Rector's Files
Title (Free Text Part)	Rector's Logs			
Begin Date	09/01/1967	End Date	05/30/1968	DB Box Number 32641.04
Box	Record Number	SCHL/R1700/16	Classification	School Records - Rector's Files
Title (Free Text Part)	Rector's Logs			
Begin Date	09/01/1968	End Date	05/30/1970	DB Box Number 32641.05
Box	Record Number	SCHL/R1700/45	Classification	School Records - Rector's Files
Title (Free Text Part)	Rector's Logs			
Begin Date	09/01/1970	End Date	05/30/1972	DB Box Number 32641.06
Box	Record Number	SCHL/R1700/46	Classification	School Records - Rector's Files
Title (Free Text Part)	Rector's Logs			
Begin Date	09/01/1972	End Date	05/30/1973	DB Box Number 32641.07
Box	Record Number	SCHL/R1700/47	Classification	School Records - Rector's Files
Title (Free Text Part)	Rector's Logs			
Begin Date	09/01/1973	End Date	05/30/1974	DB Box Number 32641.08

Box	Record Number	SCHL/R1700/48	Classification	School Records - Rector's Files
Title (Free Text Part)	Rector's Logs			
Begin Date	09/01/1975	End Date	05/30/1977	DB Box Number 32642.01
Box	Record Number	SCHL/R1700/49	Classification	School Records - Rector's Files
Title (Free Text Part)	Rector's Logs			
Begin Date	09/01/1977	End Date	05/30/1980	DB Box Number 32642.02
Box	Record Number	SCHL/R1700/50	Classification	School Records - Rector's Files
Title (Free Text Part)	Rector's Logs			
Begin Date	09/01/1980	End Date	05/30/1981	DB Box Number 32642.03
Box	Record Number	SCHL/S0910/22	Classification	School Records - School Calendar
Title (Free Text Part)	Niles College			
Begin Date	01/01/1981	End Date	12/31/1992	DB Box Number 32644.01
Box	Record Number	SCHL/S0920/39	Classification	School Records - School Directory
Title (Free Text Part)	Student and Faculty Directories			
Begin Date	01/01/1961	End Date	12/31/1990	DB Box Number 32643.09
Box	Record Number	SCHL/S1050/197	Classification	School Records - School Evaluative and Accreditation Files
Title (Free Text Part)	Seminary Study Phase II			
Begin Date	06/01/1969	End Date	12/31/1970	DB Box Number 32642.05
Box	Record Number	SCHL/S1050/198	Classification	School Records - School Evaluative and Accreditation Files
Title (Free Text Part)	Seminary Study Phase III			
Begin Date	06/01/1969	End Date	12/31/1970	DB Box Number 32642.06

Box	Record Number	SCHL/S1050/199	Classification	School Records - School Evaluative and Accreditation Files
Title (Free Text Part)		Seminary Study Phase III and Reports		
Begin Date	06/01/1969	End Date	12/31/1970	DB Box Number 32642.07
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Box	Record Number	SCHL/S1050/200	Classification	School Records - School Evaluative and Accreditation Files
Title (Free Text Part)		NCEA Accreditation		
Begin Date	06/01/1974	End Date	12/31/1985	DB Box Number 32642.09
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Box	Record Number	SCHL/S1050/201	Classification	School Records - School Evaluative and Accreditation Files
Title (Free Text Part)		Five-Year Strategic Plan		
Begin Date	01/01/1987	End Date	12/31/1987	DB Box Number 32643.01
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Box	Record Number	SCHL/S1050/202	Classification	School Records - School Evaluative and Accreditation Files
Title (Free Text Part)		Five-Year Strategic Planning		
Begin Date	01/01/1991	End Date	12/31/1993	DB Box Number 32642.10
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Box	Record Number	SCHL/S1050/22	Classification	School Records - School Evaluative and Accreditation Files
Title (Free Text Part)		Marshall Reports		
Begin Date	01/01/1984	End Date	12/31/1988	DB Box Number 32642.08
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Box	Record Number	SCHL/S1050/23	Classification	School Records - School Evaluative and Accreditation Files
Title (Free Text Part)		Seminary Study Phase I-II		
Begin Date	06/01/1969	End Date	12/31/1970	DB Box Number 32642.04
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Box	Record Number	SCHL/S1060/24	Classification	School Records - School Handbooks
Title (Free Text Part)		Student and Faculty Handbooks		
Begin Date	01/01/1963	End Date	12/31/1990	DB Box Number 32644.05

Box	Record Number	SCHL/S1060/80	Classification	Administrative Records - Publications
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Title (Free Text Part)	Student Publications and Writings
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Begin Date	01/01/1968	End Date	12/31/1990	DB Box Number	32644.08
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Box	Record Number	SCHL/S1060/94	Classification	School Records - School Handbooks
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Title (Free Text Part)	Student and Faculty Handbooks
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Begin Date	01/01/1988	End Date	12/31/1993	DB Box Number	32644.06
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Box	Record Number	SCHL/S1150/171	Classification	School Records - School Yearbook
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Title (Free Text Part)	Niles College
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Begin Date	01/01/1981	End Date	12/31/1994	DB Box Number	32644.10
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