



Title	St. George Parish (Ewing Ave.) Parish Collection
Classification	History Records - Finding Aid
Owner	St. George Parish (Ewing Ave.)
Begin Date	01/01/1900
End Date	12/31/2017
Bulk Dates (YYYY-YYYY)	1950-1980
Processor	Maya Cazares
Accession Number	202325601
Date Created	11/21/2023
Number of Boxes	14
Security	Staff Access, Archives
Collection Language(s)	English, Slovenian, and Spanish

Biographical/Administrative History

St. George Church on 96th and Ewing was founded by Slovenian migrants in 1903. In the late 1800s, there was a rise in Slovenian immigration to the Calumet region due to work at the steel mills. There became a need for a Catholic church that catered to these Slovenians in the area. Since many of these migrants were poor, the original plan was to build a wooden church, however thanks to the help of Catholic Croatian migrants, the two groups were able to pool money to fund the construction of a brick church. Parishioners requested the placement of a Slovenian priest, and in May 1903 the archdiocese sent Ft. John Kranjec from Pittsburgh, PA. They broke ground on the construction in June of 1903, and by December 6th they celebrated their first mass. For an unknown reason, the Croatians left to found a different parish in 1912. After this point, St. George was a primarily Slovenian institution until 1939, when Ft. Aloysius Madic assumed the role of pastor with a tolerant mindset, and welcomed non-Slovenians in the Southeast side to the church.

In 1922, the Slovene Franciscan fathers from Lemont, IL were introduced to the parish and took pastoral care of it until 1998. The School Sisters of St. Francis of Christ the King, also from Lemont, IL, began teaching CCD classes to children of parishioners in 1920, but it wasn't until 1951 that a formal grammar school would be established.

There had been talk about building a school since the construction of the church, however there was never enough funds to take action until a fundraising campaign for a school and community center began in 1943 by Ft. Alexander Urankar. They were able to break ground for a school in 1949 and the school opened fall of 1951 for grades six and below. By fall of 1952 they taught all 8 grades and had the first graduating class in spring of 1953. In the early years the school was entirely taught by nuns from St. Francis of Christ the King. By 1978 there were 164 students with 4 nuns and 4 teachers. In 1987 the sisters had left their teaching role at the parish, leaving the school in financial trouble, being unable to staff 8 teachers. The school closed in June 1987. For a time, the archdiocese used the school building to teach the upper grades at Our Lady of Guadalupe school.

St. George hosted a variety of different ethnicities throughout its history. Initially founded by Slovenians, the church became home to Italians and Latinos as well. By 1980, there were no more Slovenian masses and the church was not exclusive to Slovenians. In 1980 the largest ethnic group at St. George was Italians. In March of 1985 the first Spanish mass was performed, and in 1998 CCD courses had been taught in English and Spanish, indicating the growing Latino population in the area. After this point Spanish speakers appeared to

make up a large portion of parishioners, as bulletins and other documents appeared in Spanish and English into the 2000s.

Provenance

The material from this collection was acquired from St. George parish over one accession in October 2023 (ID: 202325601). The materials were owned and organized by the parish until its closure during the Renew My Church process. Upon the closure of St. George, the Archives and Records Center assumed custody of its historical records.

Separations

One oversized folder containing historical photographs at HIST/P2900/453. One video cassette documenting the centennial mass at ADMN/V3450/372.

Scope and Content

This collection consists of 11 letter size boxes, 3 half letter boxes, 1 oversize folder with photos, and one video cassette tape with a total volume of approximately 6.25 linear feet.

This collection is mostly focused on St. George Parish, but there are historical documents and photos pertaining to St. George School as well. There is also a significant amount of documents and photos about organizations that operate within the parish such as KSKJ (Knights of St. Florian – Slovenian Catholic Union), Holy Name Society, Ladies Guild, School Mothers, and more.

The series included in this collection are bulletins, meeting minutes, financial records, historical documents, newsletters, publications, and photos. The available records do generally cover the entire duration of the church's existence in one form or another, however there is almost nothing but bulletins after 2003 until the church's closure.

Some of the most noteworthy items from this collection are the detailed set of photos of the interior of the church. These photos showcase the statues, paintings, stained glass windows, and stations of the cross and were taken in the early 2000s. Additionally, the commemorative books provide the reader with a clear sense of St. George's history and community activity at the time that they were written. There is also a set of meeting minutes from the Church Committee and Assembly meeting minutes ranging from 1900-1931. They were translated from Slovenian to English in the early 2000s, and the original Slovenian version no longer exists. This gives a glimpse of administrative history of the church in a time when not many other documents still exist.

Series Description

Series 1: Bulletins (boxes 1-6) (1939-2017) (Bulk: 1970-1979, 2000-2017). The first two boxes are all bulletins from 1939-2000. There is one bulletin for 1939 and one for 1965, then an incomplete but large amount of bulletins ranging from 1970-1979. The selection of bulletins for the 1980s and 1990s is sparse, but then from 2000-2017 there are complete and bound sets.

Series 2: Meeting Minutes (boxes 7-8) (1909-2003) Contains books of handwritten minutes of meetings held by the Ladies Guild board, ushers, typed minutes for the parish and financial committees, and centennial committee. Also contains the membership register for the Holy Name Society from 1950-1953.

Series 3: Financial Records (boxes 9-10) (1909-2003) Contains annual financial reports that were both forms distributed internally for the church and archdiocese (annual report documents) and booklets that were distributed externally to St. George's parishioners (financial report booklets). These records also contain "spiritual" reports about the parish, documenting the number of baptisms, weddings, etc. Initially, the financial report booklets are in Slovenian until 1920, then starting in 1921 the text is bilingual containing Slovenian/English.

Series 4: Historical Documents (box 11) (1904-2003) Pertains to miscellaneous historical materials including commemorative anniversary books for the parish and the school, parish almanacs, programs, school

documents, lists of CCD students, correspondence, and documents about a women's group in the parish.

Series 5: Lemont Newsletters (box 12) (1962-1964) Contains bound copies of the Ave Maria newsletters from Lemont, IL. While they were not created at St. George, they are relevant to the collection because they were created by the Franciscan Fathers in Lemont, the same organization of pastors that served St. George from 1922-1998. These newsletters are entirely in Slovenian.

Series 6: Publications (box 13) (1913-1993) Contains Slovenian books with topics such as poem, prayer, non-fiction biography, fairy tales, school textbooks, and a seminary yearbook.

Series 7: Photos (box 14) (1910-2003) Contains photographs from the church's construction and founding to its 100th anniversary in 2003. There are group photos of church and school organizations such the choir, KSKJ/Knights of St. Florian/Slovenian Catholic Union, Holy Name Society (and the junior organization), School Mothers, Confraternity of Christian Mothers, Sodality of Mary, parish trustees, and more. There are also first communion photos from select yeras. Additionally, there are some classroom photos and graduation photos/composites. There are also a substantial amount of photos of the interior of the church. These photos detail the artwork of the parish including statues, murals, stained glass windows, and stations of the cross. There are also many other photos miscellaneous photos that depict church life and activity through fundraisers, anniversary dinners, and other special events.

Box List

Accession	Record Number	202325601	Classification	
Title (Free Text Part)	St. George Parish (Ewing Ave.), Closing 9/13/2023			
Box	Record Number	ADMN/M3300/1222	Classification	Administrative Records - Minutes
Title (Free Text Part)	St. George Parish (Ewing Ave.)			
Begin Date	01/01/1944	End Date	12/31/1966	DB Box Number 33028.03
Box	Record Number	ADMN/M3300/1223	Classification	Administrative Records - Minutes
Title (Free Text Part)	St. George Parish (Ewing Ave.)			
Begin Date	01/01/1900	End Date	12/31/2003	DB Box Number 33028.04
Box	Record Number	ADMN/N1700/89	Classification	Administrative Records - Newsletters
Title (Free Text Part)	Ave Maria Newsletters			
Begin Date	01/01/1962	End Date	12/31/1966	DB Box Number 33028.08
Box	Record Number	ADMN/P0170/241	Classification	Administrative Records - Parish Annual Reports
Title (Free Text Part)	Parish Annual Reports and Financial Statements			
Begin Date	01/01/1910	End Date	12/31/2000	DB Box Number 33028.05

Box	Record Number	ADMN/P0170/242	Classification	Administrative Records - Parish Annual Reports	
Title (Free Text Part)		Parish Annual Reports			
Begin Date	01/01/1909	End Date	12/31/2003	DB Box Number	33028.06
Box	Record Number	ADMN/P8100/541	Classification	Administrative Records - Publications	
Title (Free Text Part)		Slovenian Publications			
Begin Date	01/01/1913	End Date	12/31/1993	DB Box Number	33028.09
Electronic Stc	Record Number	ADMN/V3450/624	Classification	Administrative Records - Video Recordings	
Title (Free Text Part)		Centennial Mass			
Begin Date	01/01/2003	End Date	12/31/2003		
Box	Record Number	HIST/H3300/527	Classification	History Records - Historical Records	
Title (Free Text Part)		Parish Historical Records			
Begin Date	01/01/1904	End Date	12/31/2003	DB Box Number	33028.07
Folder	Record Number	HIST/P2900/453#10	Classification	History Records - Photographs	
Title (Free Text Part)		Miscellaneous Group Photos			
Begin Date	01/01/1911	End Date	12/31/1930	DB Box Number	32468.01
Box	Record Number	HIST/P2900/873	Classification	History Records - Photographs	
Title (Free Text Part)		Parish and School Photographs			
Begin Date	01/01/1910	End Date	12/31/2003	DB Box Number	33029.01
Box	Record Number	PRSH/P0120/596	Classification	Parish Records - Bulletins	
Title (Free Text Part)		St. George Parish (Ewing Ave.)			
Begin Date	01/01/1939	End Date	12/31/1986	DB Box Number	33027.07
Box	Record Number	PRSH/P0120/597	Classification	Parish Records - Bulletins	
Title (Free Text Part)		St. George Parish (Ewing Ave.)			
Begin Date	01/01/1987	End Date	12/31/2000	DB Box Number	33027.08

Box	Record Number	PRSH/P0120/598	Classification	Parish Records - Bulletins
Title (Free Text Part)	St. George Parish (Ewing Ave.)			
Begin Date	01/01/2001	End Date	12/31/2005	DB Box Number 33027.09

Box	Record Number	PRSH/P0120/599	Classification	Parish Records - Bulletins
Title (Free Text Part)	St. George Parish (Ewing Ave.)			
Begin Date	01/01/2006	End Date	12/31/2009	DB Box Number 33027.10

Box	Record Number	PRSH/P0120/600	Classification	Parish Records - Bulletins
Title (Free Text Part)	St. George Parish (Ewing Ave.)			
Begin Date	01/01/2010	End Date	12/31/2013	DB Box Number 33028.01

Box	Record Number	PRSH/P0120/601	Classification	Parish Records - Bulletins
Title (Free Text Part)	St. George Parish (Ewing Ave.)			
Begin Date	01/01/2014	End Date	12/31/2017	DB Box Number 33028.02