



EPISCOPAL DIOCESE OF PITTSBURGH, COMMISSION ON ARCHIVES AND HISTORY
DIOCESAN & ARCHIVAL POLICY ON RESTRICTED RECORDS

The Diocesan Archives maintains records which are restricted and closed to public access for a designated period. These records include files on clergy, candidates for Holy Orders, and individuals seeking to be remarried within the Church. In order to protect the guarantees of confidentiality under which these records were originally created, neither the physical record, nor the information contained therein is open to the public *except* under the special circumstances described below.

Recognizing that these records contain valuable and useful information of vital, historical, genealogical, and biographical significance, the Archives will accept inquiries from qualified researchers or interested parties *only after these procedures have been followed* to the satisfaction of the Archivist or other appointed member of the Bishop's staff:

1. The researcher must be prepared to demonstrate that a serious and thorough search for the information in other non-restricted public records has been conducted; and
2. All requests for access to restricted diocesan records will be submitted as a written letter of inquiry, in which the researcher states *in specific terms*, a) the overall purpose of the research, b) the documents sought to meet this purpose, and c) the use(s) the researcher intends to make of the information, in the event that access to it is granted.

Once these requirements have been met by the researcher, the Archivist will review the request and forward it to the Bishop, along with a recommendation based on a) the merit of the request and b) the content of the file(s) in question.

THE SOLE AUTHORITY FOR GRANTING ACCESS TO RESTRICTED DIOCESAN RECORDS RESTS WITH THE BISHOP OF THE DIOCESE.

1. Under no circumstances will individuals be allowed to review the physical contents of a file without written permission of the Bishop of the Diocese.
2. No duplication of restricted records in any format (photocopy, digital camera image, scanned image, etc.) will be allowed without the approval of the Bishop.
3. Once administrative permission is received, the Archivist of the diocese will undertake to convey the information requested in a manner that will not compromise the confidentiality of the records as a whole.

The Archivist will have the responsibility of granting access to other sensitive, contemporary records which are part of larger collections that are otherwise open to the public.