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National Archives of the Marianist Province of the United States (NAMPUS). (Photo: NAMPUS)

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MARIANISTS CONSOLIDATE PROVINCE ARCHIVES IN SAN ANTONIO

Mary E. Kenney, Marianist Province Archivist, National Archives of the Marianist Province of the United States

In June 2002, the four provinces of the Society of Mary in the United States merged into a single province. During the merger process it was decided to create the National Archives of the Marianist Province of the United States (NAMPUS) in San Antonio, Texas.

In August 2014, I was given the charge to make NAMPUS a reality.

There was no precedent or physical preparation. But there was goodwill, sound financial backing, high professional expectations, and trust. An 8,000 s.f. facility, located on the St. Mary's University campus, was purchased and leased for 50 years to the U.S. Province. As we proceeded with renovations the entire structure was cleaned, repainted, and new floors laid. Four classrooms were

converted into stacks with the installation of manual movable shelves and flat files. Microfilm cabinets were purchased as well as a Uscan+ microfilm scanner. We rewired for a new computer network, sharing the university network and supported by the IT Department.

During this process I spent many weeks at the University of Dayton, preparing the shipment of the archives of three provinces plus the original American Province, 1849-1908, from the third floor of the Roesch Library. Five full van-loads were delivered by the North American Van Lines from Dayton over a year and a half period.

A major construction project was begun in 2017, managed by Keller-Martin, San Antonio, to upgrade the HVAC system, install a room for the preservation of two glass negative collections, upgrade lighting, and lower the ceiling of the reading room. Wood-faced booked

"Faith, Education and Charity: Marianist Origins in San Antonio, 1852-1927" exhibition. (Photo: National Archives of the Marianist Province of the United States (NAMPUS) in San Antonio, Texas)



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MARIANIST PROVINCE ARCHIVES

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April 2015 PAC shipment. (Photo: National Archives of the Marianist Province of the United States in San Antonio, Texas)

cases were installed in the Reading Room which was now properly lit for researchers.

The San Antonio Tricentennial, 2018, was approaching and the head of the History Department, Gerald Poyo, began to make extensive use of our Texas collections, with the goal of a professional exhibit, "Faith, Education and Charity: Marianist Origins in San Antonio, 1852-1927."

This potential exhibit gave impetus to the final phase of renovation, the conversion of our lobby of 1,600 s.f. and height at the center of 28 feet to a museum-quality space. With the assistance of Spellerburg Associates

April 2015 lobby with PAC. (Photo: National Archives of the Marianist Province of the United States in San Antonio, Texas) of Austin, the last piece of my original vision was realized. Through the new exhibit lighting and the use of movable walls, patterned after those at the Harry Ransom Center. UT, Austin, the first exhibit was opened in February 2020.



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(Photo: National Archives of the Marianist Province of the United States in San Antonio, Texas)

We have achieved the housing of the evidence of accomplishments of the Sons of Mary during their history as educators in the United States and in their worldwide missions over almost two centuries.

This accomplishment was the work of many hands and minds. At this point NAMPUS is well-integrated into the university community, offering support to the students and faculty of the History Department in particular. Professor Poyo's diligent research through the 19th and early 20th century records, with the assistance of his capable students, resulted in an exhibit useful to everyone in San Antonio and environs.

As I had mentioned in my initial

interview with the Marianists in spring 2014, a project of the large scope and complexity they proposed would require the energies of many and a firm vision. Quoting St. Madeleine Sophia Barat, R.S.C.J. I stated "Walk with confidence. All things take time, patience, and trust in God."

