

A Guide to the Formation and vocation records, 1891-2017

Collection Summary

Creator(s): Congregation of the Sacred Heart (Houston, Tex.)

Title(s): Formation and vocation records

Date(s) (Inclusive): 1891-2017

Abstract: This collection contains correspondence, newsletters, handbooks, forms, meeting notes, a dairy, photographs, and promotional materials related to the Dominican Sisters of Houston's formation and vocation programs.

Identification: 00004

Extent(s): 0.83 Linear Feet

Location(s): ST-C1/21.1; ST-C1/2.1

Language(s): English

Repository: [Dominican Sisters of Houston Archives](#)

Sponsor: This EAD finding aid was created as part of the TARO New Member Initiative through grant funding provided by the Summerlee Foundation.

Collection Details

Administrative History

The Dominican Sisters of Houston's vocation and formation programs exist to prepare young women to discern their Dominican vocations and to prepare them for life as sisters.

Originally, no formal vocation or formation programs existed within the congregation. Once the congregation was permitted to begin accepting young women, programs formed. The formation program, which focused on preparing women for religious life, was originally run by the foundress and the then prioress, Mother Mary Agnes Mageveny. There is no record of an official vocation program in the early years of the congregation. Instead, sisters fostered vocations in their interaction with students and young women in the community and through periodic recruitment trips.

As the congregation grew, the formation program became more structured. In the program developed prior to Vatican II, a young woman interested in entering the convent began her religious journey as a Postulant, an individual requesting admittance to the congregation. After six months, she gained admission to the novitiate as a Novice. After a year of preparation and training under the Novice Mistress, the Novice would make her first vows to the congregation, renewing this periodically before making her final, or perpetual, vows.

This changed with Vatican II. By 1964, congregations of women religious all around the country, including the Dominican Sisters of Houston, began making changes to their formation programs. They began to place a greater focus on theology and scripture as they prepared young women to be sisters.

After the Chapter of Affairs in 1968 and 1969, the Dominican Sisters of Houston formally restructured their formation program. Throughout the next several decades the formation program would continue to develop and change. Vocation work also became more of priority and the number of women entering the convent decreased. As such, various formation and vocation committees and teams were formulated over the years to revamp and adjust the programs to the needs of the times.

Scope and Contents Note

This collection contains correspondence, newsletters, handbooks, forms, meeting notes, a dairy, photographs, and promotional materials related to the Dominican Sisters of Houston's formation and vocation programs. It is organized into two series: Program records and Novitiate records.

The program records series, consists of correspondence, resources and forms, meetings notes, promotional materials, a Novice Mistress' dairy, and accounts related to the vocation and formation programs. The Novice Mistress' diary, authored by Mother Catherine Kenney and her predecessor, provides insight into convent life immediately following Mother Mary Agnes Mageveny's death and Mother Pauline Gannon's succession and life in

the early convent and novitiate. Other materials document the activities and priorities of the congregation with respect to vocations and formation. While these materials document these programs over a large stretch of time, they do not document the programs in their entirety as records are somewhat sparse.

The second series, Novitiate records series is comprised of materials created by the Novices in formation. It includes newsletters and journals authored by the Novices as well as some correspondence. These materials shed light on the daily life, experiences, and attitudes of the Novices while in formation. In these records, Novices comment on life in the Novitiate, the changes and the goings-on in the congregation, and poke fun at each other.

Arrangement

These records are arranged into two series:

- I. Program records
- II. Novitiate records

∨ Collection Restrictions

Access Restrictions

A portion of these records are restricted. Contact the archivist for details.

Use Restrictions

Written permission from the repository is required for photocopying or duplicating material.

∨ Administrative Information

Preferred Citation

Formation and vocation records, 1891-2017, Dominican Sisters of Houston Archives, Houston, TX

Acquisition Information

Accession numbers: 2021-052 ; 2021-069 ; 2022-071

Processing Information

Records processed by Laura Grove, July 2022.

∨ Other Resources

Related Material

More information on formation and vocation programs may be found in:

- Customs and Ceremonials, 1875-1966, The Dominican Sisters of Houston Archives, Houston, TX.
- Committees, task forces, and studies records, 1929-2022, The Dominican Sisters of Houston Archives, Houston, TX.
- General Council papers, 1891-2016, The Dominican Sisters of Houston Archives, Houston, Texas.

∨ Subject Terms

Index Terms :

- **Subjects (Persons) :**
 - Kenney, M. Catherine, Sister
- **Subjects (Organizations) :**
 - Congregation of the Sacred Heart (Houston, Tex.)
- **Subjects :**
 - Novitiate
 - Spiritual formation
 - Postulancy
 - Vocation (in religious orders, congregations, etc.)

• **Document Types :**

- Chronicles and annals
- Newsletters
- Correspondence

∨ **Inventory**

Inventory Information

Description of Series

∨ **Title: Program records, 1891-2017**

Title: Internal records,, 1891-2017

Title: Novice-ship diary, 1891-1900

Box 1

Folder 1

Title: Novice-ship diary [Transcription], 1891-1900

Box 1

Folder 2

Title: Novice and postulant accounts, 1934-1959

Box 1

Folder 3

Title: Postulants' names and candidates lists, 1956-1967

Box 1

Folder 4

Title: Correspondence regarding Juniorate, 1965-1967

Box 1

Folder 5

Title: Pre-novitiate program, 1969

Box 1

Folder 6

Title: Vocation-formation committee correspondence, 1972

Box 1

Folder 7

Title: Formation team correspondence, 1973-1976

Box 1

Folder 8

Title: Vocation and formation newsletters by Sister Carol Mayes, 1977-1979

Box 1

Folder 9

Title: Formation handbooks, 1981, 1985, 1998, 2010, undated

Box 1

Folder 10

Title: Vocation and formation office correspondence, 1986-1998

Box 1

Folder 11

Title: Vocation initiative project, 2001

Box 1

Folder 12

Title: Vocations team, 2016-2017

Box 1

Folder 13

Title: Resources and forms,, 1982-1999, undated

Title: Novice Mistress and novitiate information, 1982, 1986

Box 1

Folder 14

Title: Miscellaneous formation resources, 1983-1999, undated

Box 1

Folder 15

Title: Ceremonial and rituals, 1992

Box 1

Folder 16

Title: Formation transfer process, Undated

Box 1

Folder 17

Title: Deposition use and usufruct, Undated

Box 1

Folder 18

Title: Rite final profession and planning papers, Undated

Box 1

Folder 19

Title: Pre-vow agreements, Undated

Box 1

Folder 20

Title: Photographs and promotional materials,, 1915-2001, undated

Title: Photographs of postulants and novices, 1915-1967

Box 2

Folder 1

Title: Newspaper advertisements, 2001

Box 2

Folder 2

Title: Vocation brochures and promotional materials, Undated

Box 2

Folder 3

✓ **Title:** **Novitiate records**, 1923-1942

Title: Novice newsletters, 1923-1942

Box 2

Folder 4

Title: Novices' correspondence, 1925-1932

Box 2

Folder 5

Title: Novitiate journal, 1925-1928

Box 2

Folder 6

