



Introduction

Contents

Purpose	1
Background	2
Criteria for the list	3
How to interpret the list	4
About Catholic archives	7
Types of relevant records in Catholic archives	7
About the Compilers	10
Glossary of Terms.....	11

Purpose

Compiled by a group of archivists, historians, and concerned Catholics, the List of Catholic-operated Native Boarding Schools in the United States, pre-1978 represents the first and most comprehensive source for information on Native boarding schools that were overseen or staffed by the Catholic Church before 1978. Our motivation for assembling this data was to provide a resource to help boarding school survivors, their descendants, Tribal Nations, and the Church itself navigate the history of Catholic involvement with Native boarding schools¹.

The list has two primary objectives: first, to identify all Catholic-operated boarding schools designated specifically to educate Native American and Alaska Native children in the United States, and second, to identify all Catholic entities that were involved in the operation of each school². We are under no pretense that our list is complete. We have done our best to offer the most accurate information possible, but we also anticipate future revisions as additional information is obtained.

¹ We recognize the difficulty in terminology around the terms Native, Indigenous, Native American, American Indian, etc. Each of these terms have varying historical, legal, and cultural connotations, and the diversity of Tribal Nations, communities, and individuals may lead to diverse preferences in self-identification. Our use of the adjective Native is intended to be both inclusive and concise, but we welcome correction on more appropriate usage.

² According to our research to date, there were no Catholic-operated boarding schools for Native Hawaiian children.

By bringing together basic information about Catholic-run Native boarding schools and the various Catholic institutions involved in their operation, the list responds to the clear request from Tribal Nations for access to archival records in Catholic repositories. Families and communities of boarding school survivors and their descendants deserve prioritized access to information regarding their own histories. The Catholic Church also has an obligation to understand the scope of its own role in this history. Making basic facts about the history of Catholic institutional involvement in the boarding schools more transparent aids in that understanding and facilitates identification of possible sources of archival records as one preliminary step to support information access.

Our goal is for Tribal Nations, families, and individuals to be able to use the list to locate records for schools that members of their communities attended. Our hope is that Catholic institutional archives and Tribal Nations will build relationships to increase understanding about records for Catholic-operated Native boarding schools and further develop the historical record.

Background

In 2020, the National Native American Boarding School Healing Coalition (NABS) published their [List of Indian Boarding Schools in the United States](#), which identified 367 schools across the country. Two years later, in May 2022, the United States Department of the Interior released the “[Federal Indian Boarding School Initiative Investigative Report](#).” The report confirmed that over a period of 150 years, the United States government established boarding schools for Native American, Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian children with the primary objective of assimilating the children into white Christian settler culture. This was accomplished by forcibly removing children from their families and stripping them of their Native identities, beliefs, and languages.

According to the report, between 1819 and 1969 the federal government operated 408 boarding schools in 36 states. The report also tallied over 1,000 other institutions involved in the education of Native children in the U.S., including day schools, technical institutes, orphanages, and asylums. In addition to operating federally run schools, the U.S. government provided direct financial support to religious organizations or institutions that established boarding schools, day schools, and orphanages among Native populations in the United States.

The impact of the boarding school policy has been recognized by Tribal Nations, scholars, and many others, [including Pope Francis](#), as one of cultural genocide and a source of intergenerational trauma with continuing effects today. As part of their process of healing, Tribal Nations seek access to information about the schools attended by their relatives, some of which can be found in Catholic universities, religious community archives, and diocesan archives.

Our team came together around the issue of Catholic Native boarding schools in 2021. Early in our discussions it became clear that it would be necessary to research and compile a separate list of boarding schools operated by Catholic entities in order to clearly understand the scope of Catholic involvement in the boarding school system and to identify potential records sources in Catholic repositories.

We began by comparing the NABS list with information found on Marquette University's "[Online Guide to Catholic Records about Native Americans in the United States](#)." We compiled a list of any school mentioned that could qualify as a Catholic-run Native American school. We also used the [Annual Reports of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs](#) to compile a list of over 400 potential schools that at one point had some Catholic oversight.

In the Spring of 2022, members of our group began to compare the initial list with historic Catholic directories, records from the [Bureau of Catholic Indian Missions](#) located at Marquette University, and other online sources to determine which schools were boarding schools and which were day schools. In addition, we worked to identify the religious communities and dioceses involved in the operation of each of the boarding schools. Once that review was completed, the information in the list was shared with religious communities and dioceses to verify that the information was as accurate as possible.

It is important to note that this list is a work in progress. Although the group tried to verify the information listed, not all information could be corroborated with the sources available to us, so we must rely on improvements from other researchers. The group also acknowledges that there may be schools that have not yet been identified. The list will be updated on at least an annual basis as more accurate information becomes available. If research indicates that there are shortcomings to this list, there is a form for submitting updates [here](#).

Criteria for the list

How were schools identified as Catholic?

Creating a list of Catholic-operated Native boarding schools is difficult because there is no one source that provides this type of information. However, Catholic directories proved useful in identifying Catholic-operated schools for Native children. Catholic directories have been published annually by various companies in the United States since 1834 listing information about dioceses, parishes, missions, Catholic institutions, and religious orders, among other data. However, even these have limitations. Because they are annual publications, the information quickly becomes outdated and inaccurate. Much of the information in the directories relies on self-reported updates from the various entities, and if none is forthcoming, the information from the previous year is repeated. Furthermore, the information provided can be vague, confusing, and subject to various interpretations. For example, in the 19th century it was common for schools to be divided by sex, with priests or brothers teaching the boys and sisters teaching the girls. Sometimes these schools are listed as one entity and at other times as two independent schools. Often, the school is identified with the community or dioceses who staffed it, not who owned the school.

Despite these limitations, the directories helped identify which schools were established specifically for Native children. Sometimes the adjective "Indian" was included in the name of the school, and sometimes the institution was listed under a category such as "Schools for Indians." In addition, directories created before the 1960s often included the ethnicity or cultural affiliation of a parish, listing parishes as "St. Ignatius (Indian)" or "St. Stanislaus (Polish)."

ctah.archivistsacwr.org

How were institutions identified as boarding schools?

To be included in the list, a school had to meet the following criteria:

1. It was operated by a Catholic entity, such as a diocese, a parish, or a congregation of men or women religious (priests, brothers, or sisters);
2. It provided on-site housing or overnight lodging at some point in its existence (many schools started as boarding schools, but later transitioned into day schools);
3. It provided formal academic or vocational training or instruction, that is, it had an educational purpose;
4. It was established before 1978 (when the Indian Child Welfare Act was passed, which gave Native American parents the right to refuse their children's placement in off-reservation schools);
5. It was established specifically for the education of Native children, or received federal funding to bring children from reservations even if established originally for white students.

Schools that fit the above criteria were included in the list regardless of whether they received federal funding.

A school was not included in the list if:

1. It was located in an area with a large Native American population but was a parish school open to all Catholic members of the parish, regardless of race or ethnicity;
2. It provided only religious education (catechism classes);
3. It was established before the boarding school period (1819) or insufficient information was available to establish that it meets the criteria for inclusion. Public information from this time period is difficult to find, so information for these schools cannot be verified without further research. Additional schools operating prior to 1834, when Catholic directories began to be printed, will be added to the list once more information becomes available.

We acknowledge that there are limitations to this list, and we have done our best to compile accurate information based on available sources. The list will doubtless raise further questions. We hope it generates further research into related institutions such as day schools, orphanages, and boarding schools overseen by other religious denominations – all of which deserve research and attention, but which are beyond the scope of this effort.

How to interpret the list

The following is an explanation of the data points provided in the list for each school:

1. **State:** If the school existed prior to the state being established, it is listed in the state where that location currently exists.
2. **Town:** Town, city, or reservation where the school was located. Several schools were part of Catholic missions located on reservations and were not located in a named town or city. In these

instances, the name of the reservation is given, and the town or city used as the postal address was added to the notes. If the name of a town changed, that was also noted.

3. **Name:** The names of Catholic-run Native boarding schools were quite fluid and often changed over the course of a school's history. In addition, some schools appear by different names in government records than they do in Catholic records. The name given in the list is the one most commonly used. In some instances, name changes are indicated in the notes, especially in the case of schools that are still open or schools that were turned over to Tribal Nations and renamed.
4. **Dates of operation:** Dates the school was in operation under Catholic auspices, or, if still operating through some other authority. Many schools started as boarding schools and later transitioned into day schools; both are included in the overall dates of operation. If information was found about when the boarding sections were in operation, it was included in the "notes" section.
5. **On reservation:** Was the school located on a reservation or pueblo during its dates of operation? This was not always possible to determine, as exact locations of the schools are sometimes unclear. Wherever possible, we also included the name of the reservation. In a few instances, there is only a "yes," which generally indicates that the school was located on a reservation during its existence, but the reservation no longer exists.
6. **Current Diocese:** Identifies the Catholic diocese whose current territorial boundaries encompass the location of the school.

Note: Catholic diocesan boundaries have changed over time as new dioceses were created or existing ones merged. In general, records related to a parish or school are linked to their geographic location, so when a new diocese is formed which includes that territory, the records fall under the administration of the new diocese. However, the former diocese might still have historical records related to the operation of the school when it was a part of its territory.

The list provides the web address for each diocese, as well as the website or contact information for the diocese's archives if applicable. Just because a school was located within a particular diocese, that does not guarantee that records of the school exist in diocesan archival collections.

7. **Previous Dioceses involved in operation of school:** Identifies other dioceses whose historical territorial boundaries at one time included the location of the school while it was in operation. If a listed diocese or vicariate no longer exists, its successor diocese is given in parentheses. (See note for #6 above.)
8. **Religious orders who worked at the parish and/or school:** Includes the names of any congregations of men or women religious who staffed the school or associated parish (see below), and the dates of their involvement. An asterisk (*) indicates that the religious community named confirmed the dates listed. Not all schools had religious orders staffing them. Some had secular (diocesan) clergy or lay teachers and administrators.

Throughout much of the Catholic Church's history in the United States, though bishops had ultimate oversight, parishes were generally responsible for overseeing and financing parish schools. Some of these parishes had diocesan (or so-called secular clergy) serve as pastors while others had members of religious orders. Therefore, religious orders whose member priests administered a parish were also included in the list, even if they did not teach at the school, as they would have been involved in its operation.

Note: There have been many congregations of men and women religious operating in the United States in the last two centuries. Figuring out which community either owned or staffed a school can be confusing. This search is further complicated by the fact that, as the number of men and women religious declines, some congregations have come to completion (that is, they no longer exist), and their records have either not survived or have been transferred to other institutions in this country and abroad. Some independent congregations have chosen to merge, and administrative units within larger communities have changed.

In order to find records that may be germane to a particular school or its sponsors, this list provides, where possible, contact information for each community that operated or staffed a Native boarding school. Every attempt was made to identify the current information about each congregation and a website is provided for each. The location of the congregations' archives has also been included if that information was found. Even if a religious community was associated with a given school, that does not guarantee that records of the school exist in their collections. Indeed, some religious orders are currently in the process of relocating their collections for legitimate reasons. This list simply indicates the whereabouts of collections as of the list's release date in May 2023.

9. **Tribal Nations Impacted (as listed in historic documents):** This field includes the names for Tribal Nations whose children attended a particular school as listed in Catholic directories and other historic sources. However, many of these names are outdated (e.g. Chippewa vs. Anishinaabeg), use inappropriate language, or are just incorrect. It was included to provide some idea of who might have attended the school, especially if the correct name for each community could not be located. Additionally, they were included to provide potentially useful search terms for locating relevant records.

The compilers of this list are actively working with Native partners to review these terms and provide, wherever possible, current and accurate names for the affected Tribal Nations. This work is ongoing.

10. **Department of the Interior List:** Did the school show up in the DOI Federal Indian Boarding School Initiative Investigative Report? If so, it is indicated with a "yes."
11. **Notes:** This section includes details about the school, such as if it closed and reopened or changed name, and other important information in aid of further research.

About Catholic archives

Catholic archives in the United States contain a wealth of information about the operation of the Catholic Church in this country. However, individuals seeking access to Catholic archives often confront challenges with the Church's structures. Dioceses, bishops, parishes, priests, religious communities, and lay people frequently collaborate to run Catholic institutions, and at the same time operate legally, financially, and otherwise independently of each other, forming complex relationships.

The histories of Catholic-run boarding schools are equally complicated. While one entity may have owned a school, multiple others may have been involved in its day-to-day administration over time, and each of these entities might have records related to the operation of the school. In addition, many Catholic institutions fall under the jurisdiction of a regional diocesan bishop, but diocesan boundaries sometimes change, and religious congregations working within a diocese may be headquartered outside of the diocese. Potential records for one school can easily be scattered between various dioceses and religious communities throughout the country.

It is important to understand that Catholic archives are private archives, which means they are not required by law to make their records accessible to the general public. Not all dioceses or religious communities have a dedicated archivist and, as a result, can accommodate varying degrees of public access to their materials depending on available resources. While many dioceses and religious communities do allow the public to use their archives, there might be restrictions on collections that include personal information about community members, students, children who lived in orphanages, etc. Some records, such as adoption records, might be restricted due to state or federal laws. There is also no guarantee that any of the institutions historically associated with a given school have any relevant records of that school in their archives today.

Who to contact at a diocese or religious community:

- Diocese: Many dioceses have a staff directory on their website. If the diocese has a designated archivist, start there. If not, contact the Chancellor who, per canon law, is responsible for oversight of the archives.
- Congregations of Men and Women Religious: Again, if there is a designated archivist, start there. If not, it is best to contact someone in leadership. The titles vary between congregations, but look for titles such as superior, abbot, abbess, president, prioress, provincial leader, or provincial.

Types of relevant records in Catholic archives

The types of records that exist for each school will vary between dioceses, parishes, and congregations of men and women religious. It is not possible to list every type of record that might exist for a school, but certain records specific to Catholic institutions might be useful to Tribal Nations and other individuals who want to know more about the schools that affected their communities. Examples of some of the records that might be found in Catholic institutions are described below.

ctah.archivistsacwr.org

Student Records

One of the most difficult types of records to locate are student records. The location of those records depends on when the school closed, state record retention laws, diocesan policy, etc.

Beginning around the 1970s, dioceses and local school districts started enacting regulations about the disposition of closed school records. These rules vary between dioceses, states, individual school districts, and by time period. Depending on when and where a school closed, the records could be at the diocese, with the religious community who operated the school, in a parish, in a public school district in which the school was located, or some other location.

This issue is further complicated by the fact that states have recommendations for the retention of records, including school records. These recommendations can be adopted by dioceses and religious communities. For example, the state of Illinois recommends destroying student records after 80 years. That means that any Catholic student records created before 1942 might have been destroyed. Other circumstances such as natural disasters, lack of records oversight, or administrative changes might also influence whether any records exist.

Below are some suggested tips on tracking down school records:

- **Diocesan schools:** If the school was established by the local bishop or diocese, the best place to start would be the diocesan archives. If the diocese does not have an archivist, contact the Chancellor or the diocesan department of education. If the diocese does not have the records and does not know where they are, contact the public school district or local parish to see if they have the records.
- **Parish schools:** Diocesan policy varies for parish schools. Some dioceses require schools to transfer their records to the diocesan archives or education office, while others require the parish to keep the student records. If the parish closed, the records went either to the succeeding parish or to the diocesan archives or education office. If the parish does not have the records, try the diocese (see diocesan schools for more information).
- **Private schools:** When private schools close (again, depending on time and place), the records generally go to one of three places: the records remain with the religious congregation who operated the school, they were transferred to the local diocese, or they were transferred to the public school district. It is best to start with the congregation and go from there.

Sacramental Records

Sacramental records include records of baptism, first communion, confirmation, marriage, and death in a parish, hospital, orphanage, etc. In general, sacramental records are kept at the parish or diocesan archives. If the parish associated with the school is closed, the records were transferred either to the succeeding parish or to the diocesan archives. It is possible for religious communities to have sacramental records, especially if they operated an orphanage or if they owned a school (as opposed to a school that is part of a parish or owned by a diocese).

Please note that sacramental records contain personal information and can be used for legal purposes; they are also governed by canon law requirements. Therefore, most sacramental records often have some sort of restriction on access. Civil records of birth, marriage, and death, usually available through the state or county vital records offices, are often helpful substitutes when sacramental records are not available.

Cemetery Records

Typically, though not always, cemetery and burial records are maintained in addition to death records. These records might include lot purchase information and burial locations. For a parish cemetery, start by contacting the parish. Some cemetery records might be available through the diocesan archives or a centralized Catholic cemetery corporation. Cemeteries may have also been owned and operated by religious orders. Contacting the religious order's archivist will confirm whether such records are available and can point the way toward further research.

Chronicles / Annals / Journals

Religious communities often kept a written record of major events that occurred at the schools, hospitals, orphanages, etc. where they worked. The names of these types of records vary between communities, but might be called a chronicle, annal, or journal.

These records might not include the names of children who attended the school, but they often record information about how the school operated, major events that occurred (such as a natural disaster or death of a child), names of the men and women who served at the school, etc.

Correspondence

Correspondence in collections of Catholic repositories will most often be between administrators of the schools, but occasionally there are letters from boarders and their families.

Photographs/Scrapbooks

Photos for a particular school can be scattered between the dioceses and religious communities that served the school. Local historical societies, libraries, and museums may also have photographs of these schools in their collections. The boarding school era also coincided with the rise in scrapbooking, which helps document the ways in which both the children and staff interacted between themselves and with the wider public.

School publications

School publications, such as yearbooks, school newspapers or magazines, might also be found in several locations, including at the diocesan archives or the religious communities that worked at the parish or school.

About the Compilers

The contents of this list and accompanying introductory material compiled by:

- Brenna Cussen Anglada, co-founder, Catholics for Boarding School Accountability
- Veronica Buchanan, MA, Executive Secretary, Archivists for Congregations of Women Religious
- Kate Feighery, MA, CA, CRM, Director of Archives and Records Management, Archdiocese of New York, NY
- Patrick Hayes, Ph.D., Archivist, Redemptorist Archives, Philadelphia, PA
- Stephanie Jacobe, Ph.D., Director of Archives, Archdiocese of Washington, DC
- Michele Levandoski, MLIS, MA, Director, School Sisters of Notre Dame North American Archives, Milwaukee, WI
- Allison Spies, MLIS, Archives Program Manager, Archdiocese of Saint Paul and Minneapolis, MN

with consultation by:

- Maka Black Elk, Executive Director for Truth and Healing, Red Cloud Indian School, Pine Ridge, SD
- Jaime Arsenault, Tribal Historic Preservation Officer, White Earth Band of the Minnesota Chippewa Tribe

The compilers can be contacted at: catholictruthandhealing@gmail.com

This work cannot be attributed to any sponsoring agency; copyright is invested in the creators and all rights apply. This work is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution-NoDerivatives 4.0 International License](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nd/4.0/).



Glossary of Terms

Archbishop: a member of the Catholic Church's hierarchy who is among the order of bishops but because he typically governs an archdiocese or was involved in some prominent field of work (such as being a member of the Vatican diplomatic corps), is accorded the title of archbishop.

Archdiocese: a diocese in a large city or area with a large Catholic population. An archdiocese is headed by an archbishop or cardinal who, like all members of the order of bishops, are appointed by the Pope.

Archives: records—such as letters, reports, accounts, minute books, and photographs—of people, businesses, and government that are kept because they have continuing value to the institutions, historians, and to other potential users.

Authority: when applied to the Catholic Church, the term denotes oversight powers. Bishops of dioceses have spiritual, moral, legal, and fiduciary authority over the diocese to which they are assigned. The source for this authority is based in Christian scripture and tradition. In Catholic institutions, authority is vested in office holders in the Church, from the Pope to Cardinals to Arch/bishops to priests to deacons. The true test of authority is the reception by the faithful of the decrees or policies of these office holders.

Bishop: a Catholic clergyman that has authority by virtue of their office. It is the fullest expression of holy orders—that is, of the three hierarchical rankings (bishop, priest, and deacon). One of the primary functions of bishops is governance. They may do so in conjunction with a particular ministry or have oversight over a diocese. Bishops, sometimes called the local ordinary, are appointed to their see or diocese by the Pope, thus manifesting a link between the particular church and the church universal.

Boarding School: an educational institution that has onsite housing for students. The function of the boarding school is for social cohesion, that is, child development and indoctrination that is facilitated through instruction in the place where one lives. Some boarding schools also have day students who attend the institution by day and return off-campus to their families in the evenings.

Brother: among religious orders of men, non-ordained clerics are referred to as brothers. Like religious order priests, these men take vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience. They also live in community and help in various ministerial capacities. But their role is circumscribed by the fact that they cannot perform sacramental ministry, such as celebrating Mass or hearing confession.

Catechesis: religious instruction that may take place outside of a church or school setting. Catechesis is a gradual and systematic study of how to be a Catholic person. Its tenets are always adapted to the age, ability, and circumstances of the individual. Historically, however, the way in which this has been done has varied—from the days of the early Church and the ritualistic entrance into the Church community to the rote memorization of the contents of catechetical manuals to a modern-day method that presents the contents of the faith in more pastoral terms.

Catholic: in the context of the List of Catholic-operated Native Boarding Schools in the United States, pre-1978, its introduction, and other related documents, Catholic refers to the Latin Rite (“Roman”) Catholic Church. Other Christian denominations also operated Native boarding schools, but they are not covered by the scope of this list.

Clergy: people ordained for religious duties, such as deacons, priests, and bishops.

Congregations of men or women religious, or religious orders: organizations within the Catholic Church that consist of either men or women who profess vows and live under the obedience of a superior within a community structure in accordance with a specific rule of life. Men and women religious are also known by terms such as Father, Brother, Sister, Mother, monk, friar, or nun. The abbreviations of their community names are often given after their surnames to indicate their affiliation to the order.

Convent: typically, this refers to the dwelling for women religious, but older usage can sometimes link convents to the houses of certain male religious orders.

Day School: a day school permits students to live off site, typically at home, but instruction is given during regular school hours during the day. Many parochial schools are considered day schools.

Diocese: territorial area administered by a bishop. Typically, a diocese is divided into parishes that are each overseen by priests. In the Latin Catholic church, only the pope can create, divide, or merge a diocese, but it is the local bishop who manages it and is the source for sacramental ministry in that place. Multiple dioceses may be part of a province, a cluster of dioceses in proximity to one another.

Diocesan school: the school was established and operated by a bishop or diocese as part of the overall parochial school system.

Episcopal See: a diocese. Derived both from “episcopal,” or having to do with a bishop, and the Latin *sedes*, which means seat or chair. It is a symbolic chair also known as the bishop’s *cathedra*, that is located in the bishop’s principal church, also known as a cathedral. In practical terms it is the city from which the diocese operates or has its administrative headquarters. An Episcopal see can move between cities without changing the boundaries of a diocese. For example, in 1923 the episcopal see for the Diocese of Alton (Illinois) moved to Springfield, Illinois. The boundaries for the diocese remained the same, but the diocese was renamed: Diocese of Springfield in Illinois.

Industrial school: an educational setting—either as a boarding or day school—which focuses on training students in industrial skills such as mechanics, plumbing, or welding. A type of industrial school might sometimes be referred to as a *manual labor school* in which students are taught skills related to building or agricultural projects. Both types of schools have come to be seen as a method of social control.

Laity or Lay People: the ordinary people or members of a religious faith as distinct from the clergy.

Mission: a unit of a parish that lies at some distance and for which there is yet to be a critical mass of church members for their own parish. Mission centers may consist of a number of entities, from chapels and schools to clinics or employment services, depending upon the needs of local Catholics.

A mission goes beyond the established institution and the set boundaries of the institute that runs it. Though a mission attached itself to a central institution like a parish, and was often dependent upon it for personnel, a mission was often run by local people for local people who would not ordinarily be able to travel to the primary location, either for worship or other services.

Monastery: applied equally to men and women religious, this type of dwelling differs from a “rectory” or “convent” or “friary” because it is marked by sections designated as “enclosed.” That is, the “enclosure,” is the private residence of monastery occupants, to which lay people are not normally admitted.

Parish: a community of the Christian faithful established on a stable basis within a particular Church that is entrusted to a pastor under the authority of a diocesan bishop. More plainly, the parish is the community while the church is a building. Many parishes have a defined territorial boundary; others are “personal” parishes affiliated with a particular ethnic group or community.

Parish school: the school was operated by a parish or mission. Either religious or secular pastors would often contract with a vowed religious community (comprised of priests, brothers, or nuns) to supply teaching and administrative staff. Sometimes also labeled “parochial” schools.

Priest, diocesan or secular: also known as a secular priest, diocesan priests make promises to obey a bishop and serve in a particular diocese or archdiocese. They are “incardinated” into that diocese, which means that they bind themselves to a local bishop’s authority. Diocesan priests are primarily assigned by the bishop to serve at a parish, although they can be assigned to other duties, such as hospital chaplain, prison ministry, social work, or diocesan administration.

Priest, religious order: religious order priests take solemn vows of poverty, chastity and obedience after a long period of reflection and choose to live out these vows in a particular community, e.g. Dominicans, Benedictines, Franciscans, Jesuits, etc. Religious order priests are not automatically assigned to a particular diocese or parish, such as diocesan clergy. Instead, the superior of the order tells a religious priest where he will live to carry out his ministry and the ministry itself is often laid down in the form of “obedience” or directive from the superior. Religious order priests often live in community with one another, assisting each other in a particular mission. They can work in a variety of ministries, though they can also administer the sacraments and celebrate Mass. Their work depends on the *charism* of their religious order, which refers to the spirituality and particular focus for which the order was founded. Ministries can include teaching, working for the poor, leading a contemplative life, or running a parish. All religious order priests live out their vocation through observance of the order’s Rule—the thread that binds all members and establishes basic structures for their shared identity and spiritual life.

Private school: The school was owned and operated by a congregation of men or women religious. As part of their own charism or way of life, individual religious orders would often establish an educational institution in connection to a parish that they served. This would be established within a diocese with the consent of the local bishop, typically by contract. Identification of these kinds of schools can vary

between “private” and “parochial.” Some church directories are sometimes imprecise in their usage, as “parochial” can also refer to parish schools.

Province: Geographical and administrative subdivision of a number of Catholic religious orders, dioceses, or congregations. In the nineteenth century, for instance, it was common to refer to large swaths of the United States as falling into the Province of Baltimore. Typically, in the hierarchical scheme, the territory would be headed by a metropolitan see and governed by an archbishop or cardinal.

Provincial: the superior of a province of a religious order. They help guide province policies and have their authority typically recognized by General Superiors.

Rectory: a dwelling typically designated as the parish house and occupied by local clergy. Typically, this refers to diocesan or secular priests, though it can commonly refer to any cleric’s home.

Sister or Nun: a woman who has taken public vows in a religious order or congregation. Although the terms “nun” and “sister” are often used interchangeably, within the Catholic Church, there is a difference between the two. A nun is a woman who professes solemn vows and lives a contemplative life in a monastery which is usually cloistered (or enclosed), and her ministry is centered within and around the monastery, whereas a sister is a woman who professes simple vows, and lives and ministers within the world through service in education, health care, social justice, or various other ministries associated with the *charism* (spiritual focus) of her order. Sisters may or may not live in community. Nuns wear habits, while sisters may or may not. Both nuns and sisters can also be called “women religious,” and both are addressed with the title “Sister.”