

Collection Policy Statement for the Catholic Portal

The purpose of the Catholic Portal is to provide global access to the wealth of research resources relating to the Catholic experience. Of primary interest are rare, unique and uncommon Catholic research materials held by a wide range of institutions in the Americas. Some of these materials are uncataloged and little known outside of their institution. By bringing together resources in many formats from many collections, the Portal aims to assist scholars and students in finding and using Catholic research resources. The Catholic Portal facilitates scholarship and the generation of new knowledge in many fields of study.

The Catholic Research Resources Alliance has identified twelve collecting themes. These themes are intended to encourage contribution of relevant institutional resources, but are not intended to be prescriptive. All formats, including manuscripts, books, ephemera, photographs, and artifacts are of interest. Portal records identify the owning institutions for non-digital resources and, where the resources exist in a digital format, link directly to the digital resource.

Catholic Portal Themes

- 1. Catholic diocesan collections, including papers of bishops:** This theme encompasses diocesan records, documents, and publications, as well as, individual parish histories and records. Examples from the Portal: [Catholic Church bishops--Biography](#); [Diocesan councils and synods](#); [Parish histories](#).
- 2. Catholic education:** This theme relates to all levels of education (elementary school through university) administered by a Catholic organization. It may also include religious instruction, pre-school, and after-school care if it is sponsored by a Catholic institution. It may contain administrative records, historical accounts, as well as, education theory and practice. Examples from the Portal: [Catholic schools](#); [Catholic universities and colleges](#); [Religious education](#).
- 3. Catholic intellectual life:** This theme concerns the Catholic intellectual tradition, specifically scholarship in all academic disciplines which is informed by both faith and reason. Examples from the Portal: [Catholic Church--Doctrines](#); [Religion--Philosophy](#); [Religion and science](#).
- 4. Catholic literary figures:** This theme includes works by and about Catholic authors in all eras. Contributions may contain published works, manuscripts, and archival material.

Examples from the Portal: [Catholic literature](#); and searches for specific authors such as [G.K. Chesterton](#); [J.R.R. Tolkien](#).

5. **Catholic liturgy and devotion:** This theme refers to works by and about Catholic worship, prayer, and devotional practices. Examples from the Portal: [Prayer books and devotions](#); [Rosary](#); [Catholic Church--Liturgy](#).
6. **Catholic men's religious orders:** This theme includes papers, publications, and archival material by and about Catholic religious institutes, orders, or communities of men. Examples from the Portal: [Monasticism and religious orders](#); searches for specific orders such as [Jesuits--United States](#); [Vincentians—United States](#); and searches for individuals such as [Chapman, John, 1865-1933](#).
7. **Catholic missions:** This theme involves Catholic missionary activities in all countries and eras with a special emphasis on the Americas. It may include biographical and historical accounts, as well as missionary records and documents. Examples from the Portal: [Catholic Church-- Missions](#); [Indians of North America--Missions](#); [Missionaries](#).
8. **Catholic peace-building:** This theme relates to Catholic individuals and organizations involved in conflict prevention and reconciliation to build a sustainable peace. Examples from the Portal: [Peace movements](#); [Peace--Religious aspects](#); [War--Religious aspects](#).
9. **Catholic social action:** This theme relates to action taken by Catholic organizations and individuals based upon Catholic teachings on social justice. Issues include the alleviation of poverty, recognition of human dignity, and working for the common good. Examples from the Portal: [Church and social problems](#); [Dorothy Day](#); [Social ethics](#).
10. **Catholic women's religious orders:** This theme includes papers, publications, and archival material by and about Catholic religious institutes, orders, or communities of women. Examples from the Portal: [Monasticism and religious orders for women](#); searches for specific orders such as [Sisters of Mercy](#) and searches for individuals such as [Elizabeth of the Trinity, Sister, 1880-1906](#).
11. **Catholicism and citizenship:** This theme pertains broadly to the relationship between religion and national or ethnic identity. The term could be related on the one hand, for example, to distinctive ethnic experiences and practices of Catholicism, and on the other, to anti-Catholic materials which at least tacitly question the national loyalty of Catholics. Examples from the Portal: [Catholic Church--Controversial literature](#); [Christianity and politics--Catholic Church](#); [Catholics--United States--Political activity](#) and searches for specific ethnic groups such as [Irish Americans](#) or [African Americans](#).
12. **Vatican II:** This theme addresses collections of archival material generated by Vatican II, as well as its impact and legacy in the form of scholarly works, historical accounts, and critical works. Examples from the Portal: [Vatican Council \(2nd : 1962-1965\)--](#)

[Documents; Vatican Council \(2nd : 1962-1965\)--History; Vatican Council \(2nd : 1962-1965\)--Sources.](#)

Published Print Material

Deciding what published print material fits the Portal's collection policy can be especially challenging. The following types of Catholic published print material are listed here to provide guidelines for submitting this type of material to the Portal.

- Pre-1800 publications
- Privately printed material
- Pamphlets and ephemera
- Published material included in comprehensive Catholic collections (regardless of common availability or recent publication date)
- Published material not widely held in libraries or archives
- When in doubt, member institutions should always err on the side of inclusion

Comprehensive Catholic Collections: Contributions to the Portal also include the contents of collections that seek to provide complete coverage of a specific subject. These comprehensive collections usually include published books along with papers, correspondence, manuscripts, and other archival materials. Books held in these collections may not be rare or uncommonly held, and as single title holdings would probably not be good candidates for the Portal. It is their inclusion in a deep, comprehensive Catholic collection that brings them into the Portal.

Examples of comprehensive collections in the Portal include [The Graham Greene Collection at Boston College](#) and [The J.R.R. Tolkien Collection at Marquette University](#) .

The [Collections Committee](#) is able to advise members who have questions regarding the selection of material for the Portal. [Email addresses](#) are included in the roster of Committee members. Please feel free to contact the chair or any member of the Committee for assistance.

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