

# Records Management and Archives in the Parish



**Part I**

**Records Management**

# Records Management



You encounter many types of records in a parish office, ranging from routine office files to documents that date back to the parish's founding.

# Records Management



The records you deal with come in many formats, including written documents, photographs, and electronic files, to name just a few.

# Records Management



How to care for all of these records has become a real challenge in many parishes, especially the volume for which you are responsible.

# Records Management



Despite the number and variety of records you are responsible for, however, the underlying question remains the same: How do you know what records to keep and what to throw out?

# Records Management

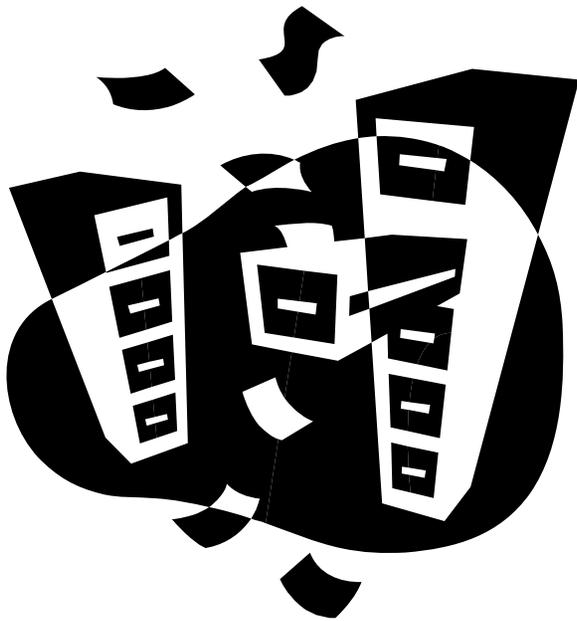


For too many, the answer is either to throw out everything or to keep everything.



Both answers are problematic and I'm here to tell you why.

# Records Management



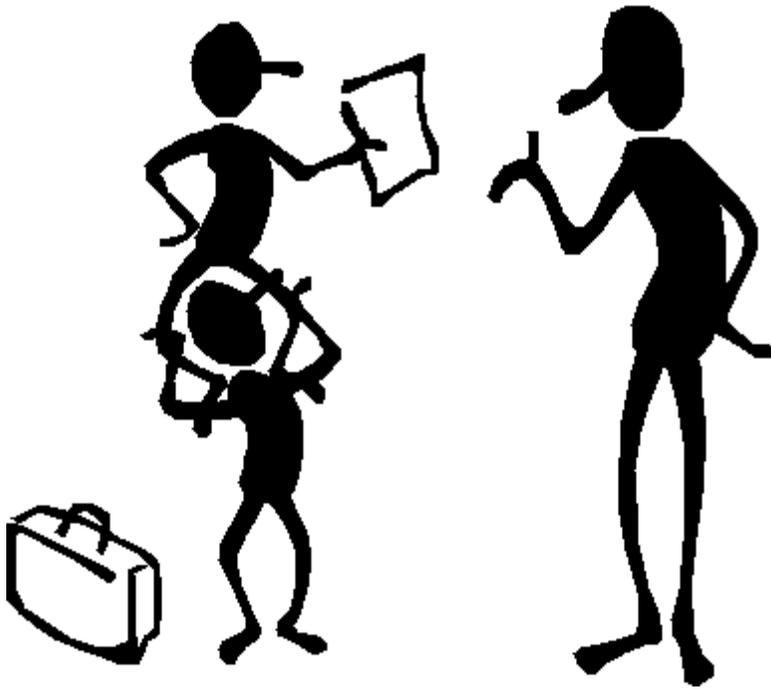
To help institutions and organizations answer these questions, the field of records management has emerged.

# Records Management



One of the most important contributions they have made is to establish that every record has a life span, from its creation and use to its storage.

# Records Management



Identifying the lifespan of a record will help you to determine what records you can safely throw out and what you need to keep.

# Records Management

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- Establish control over the records
- Improve efficiency
- Save storage space
- Ensure compliance with legal requirements (civil and canon)
- Ensure preservation of historic records

# General misconceptions about Records Management:

- can wait until desk is cluttered...
- can wait until filing cabinets and storage closets are full...
- can wait until there is an emergency...



# Records Management

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# Records Management

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- 3) Draw up retention schedules that identify how long these records should be kept.

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- 4) Store inactive records in a secure area, separating those of limited value from those that are permanent. Clearly identify all boxes, noting dates of retention.

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- 3) Draw up retention schedules that identify how long these records should be kept.
- 4) Store inactive records in a secure area, separating those of limited value from those that are permanent. Clearly identify all boxes, noting dates of retention.
- 5) Dispose of all records that have out-lived their assigned value.

# Records Management

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They are the records that will comprise your parish archives.

# Sample Records Retention Schedule

## Records Series & Title

## Retention Recommendation

### *Sacramental Records Series*

Marriage Register

Permanent. Canon 1121.  
Sacramental. Historical

Marriage Case File

Limited. Retain 70 years, then destroy.  
Administrative value ceases.

Annulment Case Files

Limited. Retain 40 years, then destroy.  
Administrative value ceases.

# Sample Records Retention Schedule

## Records Series & Title

## Retention Recommendation

### *Administrative Records Series*

Announcement Book (daily or weekly records of parish activities)

Permanent. Administrative.  
Historical

Annual Report of the Parish

Permanent. Administrative.  
Historical.

Correspondence – Official  
(concerning parish policy,  
diocesan directives, etc.)

Permanent. Administrative.  
Historical.

Correspondence – Routine

Limited. Administrative.  
Annual Review.

# Sample Records Retention Schedule

## Records Series & Title

## Retention Recommendation

### *Personnel Records Series*

Employment Contracts (office and pastoral staff)

Limited. Administrative. Retain 5 years after termination of employee, then destroy. Value ceases.

Payroll Journal

Limited. Administrative. Retain 50 years, then destroy. Value ceases.

W-2, W-, W-4 Forms

Limited. Administrative. Retain 4 years, then destroy. Value ceases.

# Sample Records Retention Schedule

## Records Series & Title

## Retention Recommendation

### *Financial Records Series*

Bank Statements

Limited. Retain 7 years, then destroy. Fiscal value ceases.

Building Fund Account Book

Permanent. Historical.

Canceled Checks and  
Check Stubs

Limited. Fiscal. Retain 7 years,  
then destroy. Value ceases.

Trust Fund/Estate Contribution/  
Pious Foundations Records

Permanent. Canon 1306.  
Fiscal.

# Sample Records Retention Schedule

## Records Series & Title

## Retention Recommendation

### *Property Records Series*

Architectural Drawings

Permanent. Administrative.  
Historical.

Construction Files

Permanent. Administrative.  
Historical.

Equipment File (catalogs,  
instructions, warranties,  
inspection certificates, etc.)

Limited. Administrative. Retain until  
superseded. Value ceases.

# Sample Records Retention Schedule

## Records Series & Title

## Retention Recommendation

### *Cemetery Records Series*

Account Card (record of lot ownership and payments)

Permanent. Administrative.

Annual Report

Permanent. Administrative.  
Historical.

Bank Statements

Limited. Fiscal. Retain 7 years, then destroy. Value ceases.

Burial Card (interment records, including name, date of burial, name of funeral director, lot number and place of death)

Permanent. Administrative.  
Historical.

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- **Identify and Protect** records of permanent value
- **Purge** regularly any records of limited value
- **Ensure** compliance with legal requirements
- **Simplify** office procedures
- **Save** space, time, and money

# Electronic Records

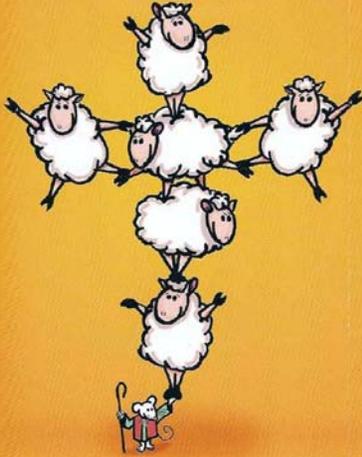
# What Electronic Records?



- word-processed documents
- e-mail
- spreadsheets; databases
- web pages
- digital images
- online newsletters

# Software for Parishes

**Powerful Management.**



In an unorganized flock, the shepherd is a powerful tool to manage the flock. Churchmouse Software™ has the answer. Churchmouse is a powerful software that covers all the needs of your family. It helps you manage and organize your parish. Churchmouse™ can do for you:

**CHURCHMOUSE SOFTWARE™**

- Intuitive data entry screens
- Intuitive friendly
- Strong search features
- Grows with the user's experience
- Reports written can be customized
- Timely no-cost updates
- Full free help desk
- State of the art 32 bit Windows® based programming
- Seamless Microsoft Office® integration
- Network ready
- Easy to learn
- Relational database

**Churchmouse Suite™** software consists of the integrated modules:

- Family Directory
- Color buttons/Printers
- Times and Leaves
- Religious Ed
- Reports

- Rosters of members
- Contributions
- Bulletins
- School information
- Cash accounts
- Burial plot maps

# Electronic Records

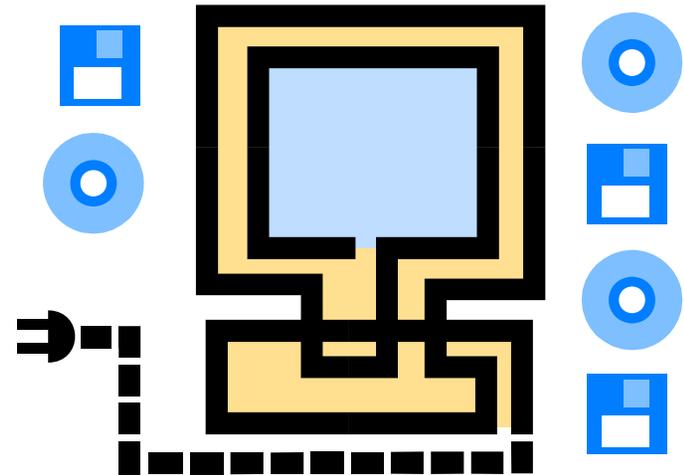
What are your preservation goals?

- Preserve content
- Ensure access

# Electronic Records

## Preservation Strategies:

- Perform backups
- Print to hardcopies
- Migration
- Store offsite



**Part II**

**Archives**

**“...archives are places of memory of the Christian community and storehouses of culture for the new evangelization.”**

- Pontifical Commission for the Cultural Heritage of the Church, “The Pastoral Function of Church Archives”



St. Lawrence  
Patron Saint of Archives

# Archives

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This is because an archives is the repository for an institution's most treasured records and serves as the collective memory of that institution.

# Archives

What does canon law have to say about parish archives?

Each parish is to have a registry or archive in which the parish books are kept along with episcopal letters and other documents which ought to be preserved due to necessity or usefulness; ... (Canon 535/4)

# Archives



How does one set up an archives in the parish?

# Archives

- **Controlled environment**
  - Consistent temperature and humidity
  - No direct, prolonged exposure to light
  - Secure space and restricted access

# Archives

- **Controlled environment**
  - Consistent temperature and humidity
  - Secure space and restricted access
  - Identify potential problems and address
- **Proper storage and handling**
  - Store records in archival boxes or cabinets
  - Organize records in a safe and accessible manner
  - Handle records with care

# Archives

What are the benefits of having a parish archives program?

- Ensure preservation of permanent records
- Create an invaluable resource for your faith community