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# ❖ The Passionist Heritage Newsletter ❖

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Volume 18 Issue 1

Spring 2011

## Local, Regional, World: The Passionist Historical Archives 20th Anniversary Celebration 1991–2011

By Fr. Robert Carbonneau, C.P., Ph.D

The Passionist Historical Archives (PHA) is too busy to be gathering dust. January 5, 2011 marked the 20th anniversary of the PHA at the Passionist ministry site in Union City, New Jersey. Please join with the PHA of St Paul of the Cross Province of the eastern United States to celebrate our legacy and future.

### *An Archives Promotes the Past and Future Opportunities*

Would you be surprised to know the National Archives of the United States was created in 1934? Yes, when jobs were scarce, banks had collapsed, homes were lost, and food lines were abundant, there was still hope for the future. Now, the National Archives research center and website offer a treasure of documents and photos.

We know history does not stop even in the midst of a cash-flow or institutional crisis. In fact, successful businesses often use archives to promote past products and shape potential future markets. Furthermore, family genealogy is popular and gaining interest.

### *The PHA Mission is Simple*

The PHA saves and preserves diverse resources that bring to life the experience of Passionist priests and brothers as they have prayed, preached, and brought the Gospel to life in the United States and throughout the world. Research or study of any document or photo can bring to life the place where Passionists made local impact or found themselves as players on the world stage of history.

### *Past Challenges as Historian and Director of the PHA*

In 2001 the Passionists assigned me to run the PHA. Because 2002 was the 150th anniversary of Passionists in the United States, with the invaluable skill of Archives Associate Anita Lewis, I was able to launch the PHA website so as to promote the Sesquicentennial celebration. Uploaded for the first time was Passionist

historical and biographical information from both the St. Paul and Holy Cross provinces here in the east and west United States, respectively.



I then undertook a second challenge: improve The Passionist Heritage Newsletter. As editor, I think I have succeeded in my goal to switch the newsletter from content that promoted interesting facts and homespun stories to a publication which stresses the Passionist contribution to the Catholic Church and society. This is education in the widest way possible so as to *understand the history* of Passionist religious life and ministry.

A third challenge was a bit more sensitive. As time went on, I wanted to apply my 1992 Ph.D. in American and East Asian history to use the PHA as a resource for Passionist intellectual life so that it might serve as a core value in the Passionist mission to preach the Gospel and heal those in need of compassion. Quite frankly, I went this route because I had become tired of hearing great stories (good or bad) about the impact of Passionists. My aim was simple: do everything to encourage preservation of Passionist archival documentation in one place (Union City) and make sure this living past did not become dead past. In other words, the very presence and future of the PHA stands as a testament to the value of the Passionists with the public in the pews or in the street.

The fourth challenge was personal. You know the old saying: “What’s the best way to get to Carnegie Hall? Practice.” With this idea in mind, I decided the best way to make Passionist history come alive was to challenge myself to write and publish. Always available

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*Special Issue: Celebrating the 20th Anniversary of the Passionist Historical Archives by Fr. Robert Carbonneau, C.P., Ph.D*

*Featuring contributions from: Peter J. Wosh, Ph.D; Christopher M. Bellitto, Ph.D; Katherine Koch; and Linda Carlson*

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for me and others was to use [The Passionist Heritage Newsletter](#) as a kind of experimental Passionist voice. However, even more inspiring and heartfelt was the chance to publish scholarly articles about the history of the Passionists in China within professional history journals. Happily, this has led to an array of journal articles on other aspects Passionist history and biography. The result of this is that the PHA has a public face from which we can move into the future.

### ***PHA confession and historic healing of wounds and hope in the Resurrection***

I have a confession to make. I have come to appreciate that the successful mission of the PHA over the past 20 years is rooted in humility. I won't lie if you don't. Historians and the public both love tension and the dirt of life. However, archives are less about drama. I hope you would agree with me that it is more about the humility of truth we all live with each day as revealed in the published essays.

As you read this issue celebrating 20 years of the PHA, know you are part of the Passionist story of history, and we Passionists are part of your story of history. In religious language, one might say that the PHA has served as a deposit of faith for the Passionists and those who wish to know and study the Passionists, much like the Gospels serve as a deposit of faith for those who wish to know Jesus Christ and gain peace of heart and soul. I hope you would agree with me that no matter our religious or intellectual heritage, we together might see the value and support to finance or use archives as a way to see and understand our face in the mirror of life now and into the future.

### **JOIN THE PASSIONISTS CELEBRATION OF 160 YEARS IN AMERICA! 1852—2012**

#### **Our 160th Anniversary Wish List:**

- Sponsor a Passionist History Study/Reflection Day at Passionist ministry sites
- Sponsor the Passionist History Award for graduate students to research in the archives
- Sponsor the Passionist 160 book/DVD to promote Passionist history and education
- Sponsor Website Memory Project in honor of an inspirational living or deceased Passionist

For more info, please contact Fr. Rob Carbonneau, CP at [robcarb@cpprov.org](mailto:robcarb@cpprov.org)

### **Reflection On Catholic Archives**

By Peter J. Wosh, Ph.D

***Editor's note:** Ministry, service and stewardship is the pulse of an archives. Back in 1995, Peter J. Wosh conducted the first professional assessment of the newly established Passionist Historical Archives (PHA) in Union City, New Jersey. Since then he and I have crossed paths numerous times. At the March 2009 Archivists of Religious Institutions meeting in New York, Peter offered a practical, professional, and inspirational presentation whereby he stressed the relevance of archives in relation to the immediate and long range lens of development work and fund-raising for any type of organization, including the Passionists. The following concise and in-depth essay provides a tripod understanding as to why creative archives planning and service is a necessity in order to fulfill one's institutional mission. In particular, two Wosh publications: [Covenant House: Journey of a Faith-Based Charity](#) (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2005) and [Privacy and Confidentiality Perspectives: Archivists and Archival Records](#) (Chicago: Society of American Archivists, 2005) reveal how he has put into practice the very message he has preached. As you read his essay, I hope you will be moved to find creative ways to assist us here at the PHA so we can develop our future as a operational voice of ministry, service, and stewardship.*

Catholic archives in the United States have a long and distinguished history. Dioceses, religious communities, educational institutions, and social service agencies have preserved a remarkably rich array of primary sources that document religious thought, spiritual life, and benevolent activity. If the sheer level of activity has been impressive, religious archivists have not spent much time reflecting on the broader purpose behind their documentary work. They have amassed extraordinarily useful collections, but have sometimes assumed that their supporters and patrons understand the significance behind their labors. In recent years, however, American archivists generally have begun to articulate a more coherent rationale for their professional labors. Three themes that emerge from this broader discussion should especially resonate with Catholic archivists such as the Passionist Historical Archives in Union City, New Jersey. They are social memory, accountability, and justice.

Social memory, in fact, has been viewed as endemic to archives for quite some time. Waldo Gifford Leland (1879-1967), one of the founders and pioneers of the archival profession in North America, first applied the

(See "Wosh" continued on page 7)

## Passionist History in the Public Service

By Christopher M. Bellitto, Ph.D.

***Editor's note:** I suspect we were introduced by name tag. That started my conversation with Christopher Bellitto. It was a simple dialog common to so many of us, taking place ever so quickly at a history convention. He simply told me he had read The Passionist Heritage Newsletter and liked it. I appreciated the sentiment and we moved on. Later, I got an email to send the next issue to his new address. As I made note of the change, I daydreamed a bit and wondered what it might be that he liked about the newsletter? When I spied him across the room at the 2011 spring meeting of the American Catholic Historical Association, I made a point to ask him. In retrospect, I think the question took him a bit by surprise. Nevertheless, he answered with honest respect and made me appreciate why I and so many others love to read and learn about history but often find ourselves wishing we had more time. I am thankful he agreed to put his thoughts in writing below. A primary objective of The Passionist Heritage Newsletter is to shrink history and make it accessible to the average person or the dedicated scholar. Yes, all of us who love history wish we had more time to pursue our interests. We here at the Passionist Historical Archives hope you will continue to support us as we reveal our Passionist history to the public.*

Here's my confession: I glance at more publications than I skim and I skim more than I read. Too many things come into our snail and email boxes. The last thing we need is to read more things that are put in front of us by people who are sure their material is urgent and no one else's is. Some of them are important, most of them are earnest, a few things are just annoying and completely disconnected to me or my interests.

So here's another confession: I was curious why Rob Carbonneau, C.P., asked me to write up my thoughts about The Passionist Heritage Newsletter. Truth be told, there's no obvious reason why I should spend time with a newsletter about Passionists. Apart from Rob, whom I've gotten to know at meetings of the American Catholic Historical Association, the only other Passionist I'd ever even met was Paul Zilonka over a decade ago when we were both teaching at the Institute of Religious Studies at St. Joseph's Seminary/Dunwoodie, just north of New York City. (I'm Jesuit-trained, after all, and we tend to stick to our

academic own.) I've never used the archives, either. Much of my own research is on late medieval church reform.

I asked Rob why he approached me and he told that whenever I see him, I tell him that I enjoy reading the newsletter. It's true: despite everything that comes across my desk—welcome and not so much—I do, in fact, make time for The Passionist Heritage Newsletter. The reason is simple: because I know very little about the Passionists, their charism and history, their preaching missions and lifestyle. But I learn a great deal each time about a group of committed men who, through their stories told themselves and through historical accounts, take me to places I've never been and engage in topics like evangelization, enculturation, and missiology that I don't study or do on my own. Through the newsletter, I'm taken from my comfort zones and I learn about individual efforts to spread the gospel in particular places by specific people working in their own ways and times—and often enough, via the archives, I hear their own voices.

It is just this kind of individual and precise micro-study on which broader interpretations and wider studies are built. The newsletter and the archives from which it grows are not only reminders that we are a global church, but they are the building blocks for telling a bigger story about that church. Surely, there are articles, books, and dissertations to be found in the boxes and shelves of an archive in a gritty New Jersey city that can take readers around the world. We'd do well, especially, to point graduate students to this repository to find more examples of the church's story.

Admittedly, that story is not always pretty. Witness the Winter 2010 edition, with its tale of the Passionists' closing of their facilities throughout Massachusetts. This last chapter in a century-old apostolate could be sad, disappointing, dispiriting, and frustrating for the historical actors—in this case, our contemporaries. The contributions do not, in fact, shy away from those feelings and observations, which is consistent with the newsletter's mission of looking “at the present situation of the Province through the eyes of Faith to try to ascertain what lessons, if any, History may be able to teach us as we try to understand our present moment and the future.” That, too, is an historian's job: to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. The Passionist Heritage Newsletter does just that.

*Christopher M. Bellitto, Ph.D., is associate professor of history at Kean University in Union, NJ, and academic editor at large of Paulist Press. His most recent book is 101 Questions and Answers on Popes and the Papacy (Paulist Press, 2008).*



## Working In the Framework: One Researcher's Journey of Faith, International Friendships, and Rejuvenated Hope

By Katherine Koch

*Editor's note: Always 66 degrees, The Passionist Historical Archives (PHA) is a professionally maintained, climate controlled, and fire proof environment. Because each archive box or photo tells a story, competent researchers are always welcome. In the last 20 years, serious academic scholars have utilized the collection. Even two undergraduate interns from the University of Scranton got college credit by becoming Christmas break historical spies. The following essay verifies why the PHA keeps and seeks to keep historic documents. Honestly, we hope and wait for people like Katherine Koch to use these documents. Uniquely, these letters speak about German history to her. Moreover, as she proceeds to write her historical World War II novel it is also true that the life of her entire family and my understanding of the Passionists in Germany has changed as well. Your support of the PHA helps us whenever researchers come to New Jersey or search via the website to find treasured documents and photos. After all, history speaks many languages in the PHA.*

My great granduncle's letters are a treasure trove. Within correspondences painstakingly mined from the Passionist Archives, I encounter his golden wit, his diamond faith crystallized through the pressures of World War II, and pearls of wisdom that remain relevant today, their significance untarnished by changing times. When he composed them, I doubt he envisioned a future when his great grandniece would curl up at home with a steaming cup of Maxwell House (the writer's frugal substitute for Starbucks) and immerse herself in the causes that drove him to write so passionately. Once Fr. Viktor Koch, C.P. thrust himself behind a typewriter, that man hammered on those keys with a mission and nothing distracted him while he made his point.

Of all the gems I've sifted from history, one dazzles me above all: Fr. Viktor's pet theory of God's Framework. When Allied victory loomed over Hitler's Germany in April 1945, an SS troop death marched Jewish prisoners through the obscure village of Schwarzenfeld, leaving a mass grave in its wake. Appalled by the atrocity, American soldiers assumed that local German civilians were responsible, and Fr. Viktor stomped up to war-hardened countrymen, defending his parishioners,

averting disaster. Schwarzenfeld's leaders accorded him honorary citizenship for protecting their town. "I was only working within the Framework that God set for me," my great granduncle remarked humbly while accepting the award. I'm sure it was gold to him—the Germans rarely confer such an honor upon foreigners—yet he attributed his role entirely to Providence. The sheer fact of his presence in that backwater village at a pivotal moment was extraordinary, to say the least.

"What's this Framework you've mentioned?" I long to ask. I'm penning an historical fiction account of his travails in Nazi Germany, and this elusive concept at the crux of his faith intrigues me thoroughly, but he's letting me puzzle that out on my own, and not without reason. He's a wise old sage, my great granduncle. He knows when to nurture the fretful soul he's tucked under his wing, and when to make her fledge in self-discovery. After eight years of research trips sweeping me and my family from the Passionist Archives in Union City, New Jersey, to Schwarzenfeld (our first journey beyond the North American continent), I'm starting to discover this Framework for myself, as he intended.

I had no idea what to expect in Schwarzenfeld. I'll confess that from the start. I'd absorbed enough commentaries about Germans who witnessed war up close and personal. The assessments were conveyed by a younger generation taking pains to pry stories from elders who turned reticent once their grandchildren breathed those foreboding words: *der Krieg*. "Grandma and grandpa just turn into walls without answers." So I expected. I needed them to shuffle off the shackles of a murky history and tell me what they remembered. My story depended upon it.

I braced myself for hesitance, taciturn attitudes, and evasive answers while I tried to delicately chart the progression of events before Fr. Viktor saved Schwarzenfeld. I found myself standing in a church courtyard, tape recorder in hand, engulfed by German Catholics who poured out their recollections so swiftly it left my translators breathless. During interludes when bilingual friends staggered away for a well-deserved break, Fr. Viktor's parishioners spoke to my recorder directly in hopes that their words might be played back, their extraordinary stories turned into English. They perceived a process at work, one that dawned upon me months later. At the time I could only smile back, uncomprehending, yet entranced by the exuberance that shone in their weathered faces. Despite our language barrier, they implicitly trusted me to tread gently through the past and hear their stories: how they

circulated a petition when the Party banished crosses from classrooms; the time a giddy rumor about Hitler's assassination resulted in the arrest of Fr. Paul Böhminghaus, C.P.; the night Party zealots threatened to hang Norbert Gindele, one of Schwarzenfeld's most brazenly outspoken Catholics; their memories of Fr. Viktor, who they hold in unwavering reverence to this day. I think they strolled away both comforted and invigorated by an American who lent them a compassionate ear, gazing beyond historical enmities to acknowledge and validate their own suffering at the hands of an oppressive regime. Seven years later our bonds remain strong, and we've made du friends in this remote Catholic village. (In the German language, du, the familiar pronoun for 'you,' is strictly reserved for dear friends—especially by older generations—and its usage serves as a linguistic badge of enduring comradeship, never to be taken lightly).

One aspect of Fr. Viktor's Framework enchants me to no end. For all the threads connecting people across oceans, all the healing, compassion, and friendship that spontaneously emerge in its eternal loom, there are focal points from which individual experiences spring forth. In my miniscule section of the grand tapestry, that origin is my treasure trove, my great granduncle's words, his letters unearthed from the Archives. They're the opposite side of a dialogue, one that started in 2004 and continues without a moment's pause.

Woven deep within Fr. Viktor's letters, there's an uplifting reassurance. Current news headlines deliver up an oppressive list of tragedies, vitriolic politics, and bleak economic forecasts that weigh ponderously upon my soul when I'm already subsisting on nightly leftovers and twenty-cent packages of Ramen noodle soup. Turning to Fr. Viktor, I glean empathy from a man who scraped by on a razor budget while hauling a province through the Great Depression. Evicted from his monastery by Nazis, he obstinately took up residence in a flower sacristy, and with unfaltering support from parishioners who delivered daily meals, he endured the war in its claustrophobic confines. His perseverance and grace are my wellspring of hope. The past bestows upon us a sense of continuity, a realization that our ancestors and predecessors suffered hardships as onerous as ours—or worse—yet, when they cling to faith and survive to tell their tales, we should take note and take heart. Sorrows and uncertainties make hours stretch like years, yet time rolls forward, the darkness will break, and night inevitably surrenders itself to a fresh and cleansing dawn. My great granduncle is conveying this point to me. "God provides where need

is greatest," he whispers from his letters. "Trust me on this." In the grip of my own hardships, I turn to friends who offer compassion along with granules of information vital to Fr. Viktor's story, and family members who sacrifice their free time after an arduous day to alleviate my burdens. In my need, the Framework comes together. Behind each thread pulling me through, I feel vibrations from a higher Power.

Amen, great granduncle: I hear you. God provides. I'm counting my blessings and I weep in shame for their abundance, even in these turbulent times.

International friendships. Rejuvenated hope. Timeless lessons in faith. Suffice it to say, discovering that treasure trove changed my outlook on life. Given the Passionist Order's holy mission to preach Christ Crucified, I have no doubt that other gold mines await discovery from those who are adventurous enough to explore the Archive's files. Wonders will abound—just work within the Framework!

### Help us Raise \$12,000 10% of our budget

- \$355—Supports the cost of the archives operations for one day
- \$100—Supports cost of transferring ongoing archival material to web site
- \$75—Supports the Passionist Heritage Newsletter
- \$50—Supports cost to underwrite research requests made to the archives
- \$25—Allows you to become a Friend of the Archives

**Beginning August 2011, the Passionist Heritage Newsletter goes "green."**

**Because we want to keep you on our mailing list please send us your email now!**



**Please contact us for any questions or information at [archives@cpprov.org](mailto:archives@cpprov.org)**

**Hey, I can relate to that! That story in The Passionist Heritage Newsletter captures my interest**

*Editor's note: The following unsolicited email from 2005 identifies the inspirational value of The Passionist Heritage Newsletter. The Passionist Historical Archives (PHA) website can have the same powerful impact. Used with permission of the author and edited for publication, read this letter sent to the archives with the realization that the PHA pushes away historical dust in search of buried knowledge: the gold for all genealogists and researchers. Certainly, every issue of The Passionist Heritage Newsletter has the possibility to reveal parts of history that bind all of us together when we question our personal past. As you see, people do read our newsletter and are motivated to learn more. Your donation will allow us to keep publishing The Passionist Historical Newsletter so others can stay on the road of their historical quest and know they are not alone. This will be all the more important as we go "green" into the future. Please support our efforts if this story rings true to you.*

Thank you for sending the latest Passionist Heritage Newsletter. This one was particularly moving for me. As a genealogist it is often difficult for me to explain the enthusiasm and excitement that I feel as I research the Carlson/ family history. You captured many of the feelings in your articles, the excitement when I found a small stone in a vast cemetery in Rhode Island commemorating the life (not death) of my husband's uncle who was killed in WWI on a ship in Japan; or the gravestone of my great grandmother in a large New York cemetery where she was buried soon after her arrival in the U.S. to be with three of her nine or more children in 1914. Or one of the most exciting moments was my tracking down the phrase in the obituary of my husband's great grandmother's obituary: that the funeral service was performed by "Father Thomas Sullivan, pastor of St. Rafael's Church, Bridgeport, CT, cousin of the deceased." This was of particular interest since my husband is not Catholic.

I have compiled all of these records into a presentation that I use with junior high and high school students to help them to put history in perspective. As you shared in your article on Hunan, China it is the people and their daily lives who explain history and luckily people like you make the preservation of the paper trail we create in our lives accessible to all who want to look.

Surprisingly, I hated studying history as a child. Now I

wish I had many more hours to study the history surrounding my Jewish family in Europe (which I have traced back in one line to 1824) as well as my husband's family history. It has been a pleasure to be able to research in Hartford. Someday I dream of visiting the archives in Vilna, Lithuania, Berditchev and Uzghorod, Ukraine with a translator to continue my studies. I have also managed to trace my husband's Danish roots back to 1820 with the help of the dedicated itinerant priest who serves Mjolden, Denmark. He searched the church records after my letter passed through the hands of two other residents of Mjolden.

Luckily I use a wonderful computer program to record all of my data and I have compiled some of my more detailed records into books and presentations.

Sorry to ramble on so, but as you can see, your articles invigorated me and spurred me on to new quests. One of the things I love about the hobby of genealogy is when I get frustrated, I can put it down for six months or longer and come back newly charged for more. I am trying to get my daughter interested (successfully) in my studies so that she may continue them at some point. I was sixteen when I began and she is sixteen now. It is making me look back at what got me started (the death of my last remaining grandparent) and how far I have come in spite of the relatives who told me they "couldn't remember anything." I have over a thousand names in my records going back almost 200 years and I have only scratched the surface.

Now, I need to prepare a presentation for our Jewish temple Sunday school 5-7th grade classes for early March. I have to decide what to share and how to excite them about family history at this young age in only 45 minutes.

I need to pass on the idea you expressed in your last paragraph in your Passionist Heritage Newsletter: "It is that our desire to resonate with the multi-cultural world," (and the heritage of these children) that "may in fact lead us back to respect how much we must bring the depth of culture back into our own lives as people and nations" through the study of our own family history. "History can be an important deposit of knowledge in the quest." There, now I have a theme.

I can empathize with the emotional and spiritual experience of your latest return to China and wish you many more such experiences.

*Linda Carlson—Genealogist;  
Special Education Teacher*

*("Wosh" continued from page 2)*

concept to religious archives in a 1917 article published in the Catholic Historical Review. Leland had been asked by the editors of the Review to survey the Catholic archival landscape, and he found the results impressive. Leland noted the proliferation of Catholic historical societies from Maine to Minnesota, the recent rise of such reputable quarterlies as the Catholic Historical Review in Washington and the Records of the American Catholic Historical Society in Philadelphia, and the growing number of monographs addressing church history. It appeared, he observed, that "American Catholics have done much more for their history than have any of the Protestant denominations." Leland believed that Catholic records proved critical if historians hoped to construct a holistic interpretation of American life: "in countless villages and towns nearly all social life centers about the church or churches, and especially is this true with regard to the Catholic Church . its schools and colleges make it also a center of educational activities; indeed it takes part in all phases of the life of its communicants." As the institutional church matured, Leland rhetorically asked, "has not the time come . to impress upon clergy and laymen alike the necessity of cooperation in accomplishing the task fundamental to all historical investigation," the building of archives? For Leland, as for many subsequent observers, the purpose of archives far transcended the purely antiquarian or the narrowly academic. History most fundamentally involved the preservation of social memory. Leland observed that "the human being who has lost his memory is indeed in a pitiable plight." Further, he commented, "just as memory of past experience is the most constant single factor in determining individual conduct, so the social memory is the most constant single factor in determining public opinion, which itself is the mainspring of social activity." Many Catholic historians and archivists have echoed Leland's thoughts on social memory and promoted the significance of carefully preserving and making accessible archival records.

If archives provide religious groups with the foundations for social memory, they also remain critical forces for guaranteeing accountability. The National Conference of Catholic Bishops hinted at this function in their landmark "Document on Ecclesiastical Archives" in 1974. The bishops urged all dioceses to appoint an archivist, emphasized the need for professional training, and most critically urged each ordinary to "grant access to diocesan archives without undue limitations." Archives, in this view, existed not just as a tool for diocesan administrators but also as an impartial, authentic, and reliable account of institutional activity. By opening the archives vault to scholars and researchers, religious institutions might

operate in an open, transparent, and ethical manner. Bureaucratic accountability depends on the existence of records that have been accessioned into the archives in a regular, systematic, and methodical manner. Archives promote both a broader public good and a significant institutional service by documenting the full range of organizational life - warts and all. And, as the National Conference on Catholic Bishops' 1974 proclamation emphasized, archival materials should be broadly accessible, and historical interpretations cannot be controlled. By promoting an ethic of service and access, archivists help their organizations to operate according to high ethical standards, documenting both successes and missteps, and promoting accountability as an institutional virtue.

Finally, archives in recent years have emerged as an important force for social justice throughout the globe. Truth and reconciliation commissions have relied on archival documents to redress grievances and correct past injustices. Archival discoveries have fueled efforts to restore assets to Holocaust victims, served as evidence to hold the U.S. government accountable for abuses in the Tuskegee syphilis study, and stimulated political victims to confront their former oppressors throughout Eastern Europe. Again, religious archives such as the Passionists, regularly give voice to the voiceless, document the lives of groups and individuals who rely heavily on church agencies and social welfare institutions for sustenance, and reflect the role of individuals and institutions in seeking social justice throughout the globe. As Randall Jimerson, a recent president of the Society of American Archivists, has argued, "archives are places of knowledge, memory, nourishment, and power."

Archivists sometimes have found it difficult to embrace that power. Resources often seem too meager. Staff members find themselves pulled in multiple directions. Daily priorities sometimes make it difficult for individuals to step back and reflect on their role in fostering social memory, insuring institutional accountability, and working for social justice. Yet the steady and deceptively mundane works of religious archivists provide the building blocks for these broader socially significant purposes. The Passionist Historical Archives in many ways exemplifies the way that a religious archives can operate as a vital social ministry. Its good works contribute to crafting a social memory for the community, cultivating an atmosphere of accountability for the religious order, and contributing to a just society based on historical understanding.

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