

# **Saint Peter's Church, Syracuse, New York, Records CMS.046**

**Finding aid prepared by Nicholas J. Falco**

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This finding aid was produced using the Archivists' Toolkit

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Describing Archives: A Content Standard

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December 1986  
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## Table of Contents

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<u>Summary Information</u> .....	3
<u>Biographical/Historical note</u> .....	4
<u>Scope and Contents note</u> .....	4
<u>Arrangement note</u> .....	5
<u>Administrative Information</u> .....	5
<u>Related Materials</u> .....	6
<u>Controlled Access Headings</u> .....	6
<u>Other Finding Aids note</u> .....	7
<u>Collection Inventory</u> .....	8
<u>I Parish Announcement Books</u> .....	8
<u>II Church Bulletins</u> .....	8
<u>III Mass and Marriage Registers</u> .....	8
<u>IV Financial Records</u> .....	8
<u>V General Correspondence</u> .....	9
<u>VII Photographs</u> .....	11
<u>VIII Church Histories</u> .....	11
<u>IX Newspaper Clippings</u> .....	12
<u>X Miscellaneous Documents</u> .....	12

## Summary Information

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<b>Repository</b>	Center for Migration Studies
<b>Title</b>	Church of Saint Peter, Syracuse, New York, Records
<b>Date [inclusive]</b>	1895-1984
<b>Extent</b>	4.0 Linear feet 8 document boxes
<b>Location note</b>	CMS.046is housed at the Provincial House of the Province of Saint Charles of the Society of Saint Charles-Scalabrinians, 27 Carmine Street, New York, New York 10014.
<b>Language</b>	English
<b>Language of Materials note</b>	The materials in CMS.046 are in English and Italian.
<b>Abstract</b>	CMS.046 documents, via administrative records, correspondence, newspaper clippings, photographs and ephemeral publications, activities at Saint Peter's in Syracuse, New York, founded in 1895 to serve Italian Catholics settled in that city. The collection covers the parish through 1984, with particular emphasis on the work of one pastor, Father Pio Parolin, at the parish from 1914 to 1922, and one assistant, father Joseph Berton, who was at the parish in the 1970s and 1980s.

### Preferred Citation note

Center for Migration Studies of New York; Saint Peter's Church, Syracuse, New York Records (CMS 046); Box; Folder.

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## Biographical/Historical note

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In 1890, Father Nicola Mennella, an Italian-speaking priest of the Diocese of Syracuse, began gathering the congregation that became Saint Peter's. However, in 1895, Father Francesco Beccherini arrived. Father Beccherini was a member of what is now called the Society of Saint Charles-Scalabrinians, a congregation of male religious founded to care for migrants in transit and in their new homes. He led the Italians of Syracuse in purchasing a former Lutheran church that stood at the corner of Saint Street and Burnet Avenue. The Lutherans had named their church in honor of the apostle Peter; the Catholics also found the name meaningful and kept it. The parish got a new church building in 1955. In the late 1970s or early 1980s the parish answered a call from the Scalabrinians' Provincial Superior to deposit historical materials at the Center for Migration Studies; these were processed in 1984. Subsequently, the Diocese of Syracuse combined the congregation of Saint Peter's with that of another nearby parish to create the Church of Saint Michael and Saint Peter, and staffed the parish with diocesan clergy instead of Scalabrini Fathers.

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## Scope and Contents note

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CMS.046 documents, via administrative records, correspondence, newspaper clippings, photographs and published ephemera, activities at Saint Peter's, a Roman Catholic parish for Italian immigrants that was founded in 1895 and that deposited this material about eighty years into the parish's history.

The records are fragmentary and somewhat scattered even within the collection. For example, although the congregation was first gathered in 1890, Series I has only two books recording the announcements read from the pulpit to the congregation each week, one covering the period from December 7, 1919, to July 3, 1921, and a second covering the period January 1, 1924, to June 5, 1927. The custom of reading announcements gave way to the custom of distributing a weekly bulletin; Series II has a run of these bulletins only for May 1951 to December 1975. Series III has two sets of registers for Masses, one recording the payment of stipends and the intentions of the Mass and the other recording the date and time of the Mass and the name of the officiating priest, but one set of volumes covers only November 1923 to November 1926 and the other only December 1923 to April 1926. Similarly, Saint Peter's priests kept a volume in which they listed the banns, or announcements of impending marriages, that they were supposed to make at Sunday Masses, but Series III has such registers only for 1920 to 1924. Series IV retains records of income and expenditure for the period between October 1895 and December 1936 and annual financial reports for some of the years between 1904 and 1921. The correspondence covers the periods 1903 to 1924 and 1974 to 1984. Series IX has newspaper clippings from 1907 to 1923 and again from 1968 to 1983. Series VI does not cover all the organizations or events at Saint Peter's, and some of the photographs are from places other than Saint Peter's.

Saint Peter's collection also provides episodic insight into the communities around the parish. One was the larger Italian-American community; for reasons that are unclear, Series VII includes a half-dozen photographs from the Feast of Our Lady of Mount Carmel held every July at the parish of Our Lady of Mount Carmel in East Harlem, an event of importance to Italian Americans far outside that geographical area. Series VI includes a photograph album with thirty images of a 1968 Columbus Day Parade. Another community connected to Saint Peter's is that of the Scalabrini Fathers. Most the correspondence in Series V is from Father Pio Parolin, who served as pastor of the parish from 1914 to 1922, and from Father Joseph Berton, who served as an assistant from 1974 to 1984. In both cases, the correspondence is mostly between the Saint Peter's clergy and the provincial superior. Father Pio Parolin was close enough to his superior, Father Antonio Demo, to address him as "Caro [Dear] Tony" or "Caro Boss," and to send along personal news about how his parish reacted to the start of World War I, or the 1918 influenza epidemic. Father Berton also wrote his superior about his personal issues, but more because by the late twentieth century it was the superior who handled the province's health and automobile insurance. Father Berton also wrote more about issues affecting the whole province, and one can see the province's growth in size and complexity.

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## Arrangement note

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CMS.046 is arranged into ten Series as follows:

I Parish Announcement Books II Church Bulletins III Registers of Religious Functions IV Financial Records V General Correspondence VI Church Societies and Church-Related Functions VII Photographs VIII Church Histories IX Newspaper Clippings X Miscellaneous Documents

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## Administrative Information

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### Publication Information

Center for Migration Studies December 1986

### Conditions Governing Access note

The archives are available by appointment.

### Conditions Governing Use note

Copyright is owned by the Center for Migration Studies. Permission to publish material must be requested before use.

### **Immediate Source of Acquisition note**

CMS.046 was deposited by the clergy of the Church of Saint Peter, Syracuse, New York.

### **Processing Information note**

In 2016, CMS.046 was entered into the Archivists' Toolkit in compliance with DACS. (The original finding aid is available in print upon request). Folder titles in the container list online may vary from the the physical folder titles.

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## **Related Materials**

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### **Related Archival Materials note**

CMS.072, Joseph Berton, c.s., Papers

CMS.073, Pio Parolin, c.s., Papers

CMS.078, 078A, 078B and 078C, Saint Charles Province, Society of Saint Charles-Scalabrinians, Records

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## **Controlled Access Headings**

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### **Geographic Name(s)**

- Syracuse (N.Y.)

### **Personal Name(s)**

- Berton, Joseph, c.s., (Rev.), 1913-1984
- Parolin, Pio, c.s., (Rev.), 1879-1970

## **Subject(s)**

- Church work with immigrants |z Catholic Church
- Italian American |z New York (State) |z Syracuse

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## **Other Finding Aids note**

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A copy of the original print finding aid is available upon request.

## I Parish Announcement Books

## Collection Inventory

<b>I Parish Announcement Books</b>		
	<b>Box</b>	
Announcement Book 7 December 1919 to 3 July 1921	1	
Announcement Book 1 January 1924 to 5 June 1927	1	
<b>II Church Bulletins May 1952 to December 1975</b>	<b>Box</b>	<b>Box</b>
	2-3	2-3
<b>III Mass and Marriage Registers</b>		
	<b>Box</b>	
Mass Register November 1923 to November 1926	4	
Mass Register December 1923 to April 1926	4	
Marriage Register 1920 to 1924	4	
<b>IV Financial Records</b>		
	<b>Box</b>	



**V General Correspondence**

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Account Book October 1895 to January 1908	4
Account Bok January 1900 to January 1908	4
Account Book January 1923 to December 1924	4
Account Book January 1925 to December 1936	4
Annual Reports 1904-1906, 1908-1909, 1911-1912, 1914-1915, 1921	4
Miscellaneous Worksheets and Memoranda 1979 to 1983	4

**V General Correspondence**

	<b>Box</b>
Correspondence 1903	5
Correspondence 1905	5
Correspondence 1907	5
Correspondence 1908	5

**VI Church Societies and Functions**

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Correspondence 1909	5
Correspondence 1914	5
Correspondence 1915	5
Correspondence 1916	5
Correspondence 1917	5
Correspondence 1918	5
Correspondence 1919	5
Correspondence 1920	5
Correspondence 1923	5
Correspondence 1924	5
Correspondence 1974 to 1984	5
<b>VI Church Societies and Functions</b>	

**VII Photographs**

	<b>Box</b>
Saint Agnes Sodality 1921 to 1922	6
School Fund Committee April 1923	6
Clergy Anniversary Celebrations 1964 to 1984	6
Columbus Day Celebration 1968	6

**VII Photographs**

	<b>Box</b>
Album 1919 to 1958	7
Miscellaneous 1930 to 1950	7
Our Lady of Mount Carmel Festa in New York City circa 1940	7
Saint Peter's Church 1920 to 1970	7
Negatives 1970 to 1985	7

**VIII Church Histories**

**IX Newspaper Clippings**

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**Box**

7

Pio Parolin, "Ricordo del Venticinquesimo anno della fondazione della chiesa di S. Pietro." 1920

7

Tu Es Petrus 1955

**Box**

8

**IX Newspaper Clippings 1907 to 1983****X Miscellaneous Documents****Box**

8

Souvenir Program 25 October to 1 November 1909

8

New church fund campaign brochure 1952

8

Saint Peter's Our Lady of Fatima Society, "Silver Tea"

8

Society of Saint Charles-Scalabrinians, 85th Anniversary program 22 April 1968

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Christmas Card circa 1965 to 1969

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Italian Spring Festival 1971

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Scalabrini Apostolate of the Sea 22 November 1976

**X Miscellaneous Documents**

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Saint Charles Province, Society of Saint Charles, Newsletter 1976, 1978-1979, 1983 8

Saint John the Baptist Province, Society of Saint Charles-Scalabrinians 1978-1979 8

Scalabrinian College Associate Admission Policy circa 1970 8