

**Scalabrinians Records on  
Melrose Park, Illinois, institutions  
CMS.060**

**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

Center for Migration Studies  
February 1987  
307 E. 60th Street  
New York, New York 10022

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## Summary Information

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<b>Repository</b>	Center for Migration Studies
<b>Title</b>	Scalabrinians Records on Melrose Park, Illinois, Institutions
<b>Date [inclusive]</b>	1941-1977
<b>Extent</b>	1.75 Linear feet in 3 document boxes.
<b>Location note</b>	CMS.060 is housed at the Provincial House of the Saint Charles Province 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.060 are in English with some Italian.
<b>Abstract</b>	CMS.060 is a fragmentary collection of photographs, published ephemera and souvenir history journals from five institutions: two Catholic parishes, a nursing home, a Catholic seminary and a cultural center. These institutions have several features in common. They are all located in the incorporated Village of Melrose Park, outside Chicago, Illinois, all associated with the Society of Saint Charles-Scalabrinians, a congregation of male religious founded in 1887 to minister to migrants, all have connections with the village's Italian-American population, and all were active in the mid-twentieth century from which time most of these documents come.

### Preferred Citation note

Center for Migration Studies of New York; Collection Name (CMS.060); Box; Folder.

## Scope and Contents note

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CMS.060 has its origins in the work of Silvano M. Tomasi, one of the founders of the Center for Migration Studies. When he conceived the idea of an archive documenting the immigrant experience, he began by asking for donations from Scalabrini Fathers working in institutions with a history of ministering to migrants. Some were able to send only fragmentary records. Archivist Nick Falco organized these fragmentary records by their geographical origin (CMS has similar collections for Rhode Island and Chicago) to create collections. This collection is organized around the idea that all records in it originated in the Village of Melrose Park, an incorporated village less than fifteen miles west of Chicago in Cook County, Illinois.

The five Series in the collection have other elements in common. All are from institutions with roots in Melrose Park's Italian-American community and in the Society of Saint Charles-Scalabrinians, a congregation of male religious founded in 1887 to minister to migrants, who arrived in Melrose Park in 1903. All were active in the mid twentieth century, although not all at once.

The five Series also reflect diverse aspects of Melrose Park's Italian-American community and the variety of approaches the Scalabrini Fathers took to their work of migrant ministry. Two Series come from Catholic parishes. Father Benjamin Franch, the pioneering Scalabrinian in Melrose Park, gathered devotees who had already erected a chapel to Our Lady of Mount Carmel and formed them into a parish in 1903. Forty years later, as Italian Americans integrated into various neighborhoods, Scalabrinians founded a second parish, named after their patron, Saint Charles Borromeo. Three other Series reflect the Scalabrinians' efforts to meet the Italian Americans' needs comprehensively. Sacred Heart Seminary, in operation from 1937 to 1970, was founded to train Italian-American priests to minister to an American-born and -raised generation. When the seminary closed, the Scalabrinians collaborated with others in the community in creating the Italian Cultural Center, which offers languages, art exhibits, events and programs on all things Italian American. At a time when other Catholics felt the impact of the baby boom and sought to build parochial schools, the Scalabrinians were aware of the aging of the population under their pastoral care. Italian communities in Rhode Island and Washington, D.C., were organizing nursing homes. Father Armando Pierini led Melrose Park's community in creating the Villa Scalabrini, where Italian-speaking senior citizens could be cared for in a language they understood.

Each institution is represented by only a few items. There are some photographs from the Italian Cultural Center, and published ephemera from all the rest, including church bulletins, programs for specific events, and souvenir journals, usually with histories and photographs. It is difficult to use the material to reconstruct the history of any one institution. Taken together, the documents shed light on the development of nursing homes and of ethnic cultural centers in the years after European migration waned, on the Scalabrini Fathers, on Italian Americans, and on the Village of Melrose Park.

## Arrangement note

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CMS.060 is arranged into fifteen series:

Series I: Our Lady of Mount Carmel (established 1903)

Series II: Saint Charles Borromeo (established 1943)

Series III: Sacred Heart Seminary (established 1937)

Series IV: Villa Scalabrini (established 1951)

Series V: Italian Cultural Center (established 1970)

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## Administrative Information

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### Publication Information

Center for Migration Studies February 1987

### Conditions Governing Access note

Open to researchers by appointment.

### Conditions Governing Use note

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

### Immediate Source of Acquisition note

The items in CMS.060 came to the Center for Migration Studies by way of the clergy assigned to the institutions represented in the collection.

### Processing Information note

CMS.060 was first processed by Nicholas J. Falco in February 1987. July 28, 2017, Mary Brown inputted the original finding aid into Archivists Toolkit using the rules in "Describing Archives: A Content Standard."

## Related Materials

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### Related Archival Materials note

CMS.055, Church of Santa Maria Addolorata (Chicago, Ill.) Records  
CMS.059, Scalabrinians Records on Chicago Churches  
CMS.078, Provincial Records, Saint Charles Province  
CMS.114 Italians in Chicago Oral History

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## Controlled Access Headings

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### Corporate Name(s)

- Scalabrinians.

### Geographic Name(s)

- Melrose Park (Ill.)

### Subject(s)

- Church work with immigrants |z Catholic Church
  - Italian Americans |x Religion
  - Italians z| Illinois z| Melrose Park
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## Other Finding Aids note

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The original print finding aid is available upon request.

**Our Lady of Mount Carmel (established 1903)**

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## **Collection Inventory**

### **Our Lady of Mount Carmel (established 1903)**

#### **Scope and Contents note**

Our Lady of Mount Carmel's records include: a September 9, 1951, booklet issued on the occasion of the dedication of the parochial school, auditorium and gymnasium; a 1953 fiftieth anniversary souvenir journal; a 1968 souvenir journal marking the dedication of a new church; church bulletins from May 2, 9, 16 and 23, 1971; and a 1971 Parents-Teachers Association cookbook.

### **Saint Charles Borromeo (established 1943)**

#### **Scope and Contents note**

Saint Charles Borromeo's records include: a 1961 souvenir history published for the dedication of the new church; a souvenir journal for a 1961 dinner dance; a program for the new church's dedication November 25, 1961; a 1963 yearbook; and a May 23, 1976, program commemorating the bicentennial of the United States.

### **Sacred Heart Seminary (established 1937)**

#### **Scope and Contents note**

Sacred Heart Seminary's records include: recruitment ephemera from the 1940s; a program for Father Benjamin Franch's seventieth birthday in 1941; a 1942 history of the province commemorating the seventh-fifth anniversary of the founding of the Scalabrinians; an incomplete run of "The Young Scalabrinian" magazine for January 1951- January/February 1954; mimeographed publications from November 28, 1951, February 11, 1952, and March 7; a program from a testimonial banquet held in

## **Villa Scalabrini (established 1951)**

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honor of newly ordained Father Angelo Calandra in 1951; a 1952 hymnal; a program for an August 14, 1954, Italian Marian Day held at the Seminary; a 1954 invitation to attend the solemn blessing of the Church of the Immaculate Conception in Unanderra, Australia; the 1962 admission policy and admission forms; the 1961, 1962 and 1965 seminary yearbooks; and a 1963 souvenir history journal commemorating the opening of the Seminary's new wing.

## **Villa Scalabrini (established 1951)**

### **Scope and Contents note**

Villa Scalabrini's collection includes: a July 1, 1951, souvenir history journal commemorating the home's dedication, which also contains information about Scalabrinian-staffed parishes in the Archdiocese of Chicago; an April 25, 1971, article by television journalist Bill Moyers interviewing Father Paul J. Asciola, who was affiliated with the Villa; and an undated postcard picture of the Villa.

## **Italian Cultural Center (established 1970)**

### **Scope and Contents note**

The Italian Cultural Center's collection includes: programs for 1973, 1974, 1976 and 1977 Center dinner dances; a 1976 souvenir journal commemorating the tenth annual dinner-dance of the American Executives of Transportation; the Center's 1976 publication "Italian American Registry," with biographical sketches of two-to-three-hundred prominent Italian-Americans in Chicagoland; the Center's 1977 calendar, celebrating "Opera's Greatest Italian Voices"; and six photographs of adult Italian classes taught at the Center in the mid 1970s.