

**Church of Saint Lazarus, East
Boston, Massachusetts, Records
CMS.043**

Finding aid prepared by Finding aid prepared by Nicholas Falco

This finding aid was produced using the Archivists' Toolkit

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Describing Archives: A Content Standard

Center for Migration Studies
December 1986
307 E. 60th Street
New York, New York 10022

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Summary Information

Repository	Center for Migration Studies
Title	Church of Saint Lazarus, East Boston (Boston, Mass.) Records
Date [inclusive]	1906-1979
Extent	1.0 Linear feet
Location note	CMS.043 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.
Language	English
Language of Materials note	The materials in CMS.043 are in Italian and English.
Abstract	CMS.043 documents activities at Saint Lazarus, an Italian-American Roman Catholic parish in the Orient Heights neighborhood of Boston, Massachusetts, between the 1910s and early 1960s. It also documents some aspects of the life of the pastor during that time period, Ludovico (Luigi or Louis) Toma. The collection include correspondence, Father Toma's seminary notebooks, random samples of his sermons from the 1910s to 1944, and ephemeral publications, and a few photographs.

Preferred Citation note

Center for Migration Studies of New York; Saint Lazarus Church records (CMS.043); Box; Folder.

Biographical/Historical note

In 1892, clergy from a religious congregatoin now kown as the Society of Saint Charles-Scalabrinians began providing pastoral care to an Italian community forming in the Orient Heights neighborhood of East Boston, Massachusetts. The neighborhood got its own parish in 1904, Saint Lazarus, named for an early bishop of Milan, Italy. The first pastor, Francesco Morassi, died in 1911, at which point Ludovico (Luigi or Louis) Toma arrived, and stayed until his death in 1961. During Father Toma's tenure, Saint Lazarus erected a new church in 1923, a parochial school in 1927, a convent in 1938, a new rectory in 1951, a shrine to Our Lady of Fatima in 1954, and a youth center in 1959. After Father Toma's death in 1961 the Scalabrini Fathers continued to serve the church until 1984. In 1985 the Archdiocese of Boston merged Saint Lazarus with nearby Saint Joseph. In August 2005, fifteen women came forward to accuse Father Toma of sexually abusing them when they were underage girls. In October 2006 the parish removed a bust of Father Toma that had been installed after his death and began the process of removing his name from buildings and streets.

Scope and Contents note

The records of Saint Lazarus parish are entwined with some aspects of the biography of Father Ludovico (Luigi or Louis) Toma. One of the two boxes of the collection holds the notebooks Father Toma kept in the seminary and the sermons he preached during his early pastorate. These are of some value for linguists and also for those studying what clergy absorbed of their training in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, and what messages they sought to convey to their parishioners. The correspondence provides alternatives to Father Toma's voice. When Father Tomas was away, other clergy stayed at the parish. One of them, Father Pio Parolin, was a personal friend of t he provincial superior, Antonio Demo, and left correspondence documenting both their friendship and day-to-day activities around the parish. Publications summarizing parish history put these primary sources in local perspective.

Arrangement note

This collection is arranged in five series:

Series I: Composition and Notebooks of Louis Toma

Series II: Homilies and Sermons of Louis Toma

Series III: Correspondence

Series IV: Publications

Series V: Other Documents

Administrative Information

Publication Information

Center for Migration Studies December 1986

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 contents of CMS.043 arrived at the Center for Migration Studies archives in the mid 1970s after the Rev. Silvano M. Tomasi, c.s., provincial superior and a founder of CMS, issued a call to the parishes in the province to contribute historic documents to the archives.

Processing Information note

In June 2020 Mary Elizabeth Brown inputted archivist Nicholas Falco's original typescript finding aid into Archivists' Toolkit according to the rules found in Describing Archives: A Content Standard.

Related Materials

Related Archival Materials note

CMS.078, 078A, 078B, and 078C contain material on Saint Lazarus parish collected by the provincial office. CMS.078 and 078A organize their material alphabetically by the name, so material from individual

correspondents can be found there. CMS.078B is arranged chronologically. CMS.078C is arranged by the subjects concerning the provincial superior, with folders for each parish, including Saint Lazarus.

Controlled Access Headings

Corporate Name(s)

- Church of Saint Lazarus (East Boston, Mass.)..

Personal Name(s)

- Parolin, Pio, c.s., (Rev.), 1879-1970

Subject(s)

- Church records and registers|z Boston |z Massachusetts
 - Church work with immigrants |z Catholic Church.
 - Italian American |z Massachusetts |z Boston |x Biography
 - Italian Americans |x Religion.
-

Other Finding Aids note

CMS has two copies of the typescript finding aid for CMS.043 prepared by archivist Nicholas Falco in December 1986.

Series I: Compositon and Notebooks of Father Louis Toma While a Seminarian

Collection Inventory

<p>Series I: Compositon and Notebooks of Father Louis Toma While a Seminarian 1906-1908</p> <p>Scope and Contents note</p> <p>This series contains six volumes. Four are approximately 6x8". Two of these are dated "1906." Three have ornate covers. All were used to copy lessons or extracts from religious works. Two are about sixty pages long, the other two are only half used. In addition there is a letterbook and a fifth 6x8" notbook dated 1908 that appears to have been used by someone learning to write English-language correspondence.</p>	<p>Box 1</p>
<p>Series II: Homilies and Sermons of Father Toma 1908-1944</p> <p>Scope and Contents note</p> <p>Series II consists of about fifty separate items. Only a few of them are dated. Three are in the form of 6 1/2 x 8 1/4" notebooks; the rest are on paper of various sizes. A few are in pencil but most are in ink. A few are in English; most are in Italian. They cover various religious topics.</p>	<p>Box 1</p>
<p>Series III: General Correspondence 1904-1923</p> <p>Scope and Contents note</p> <p>The "General Correspondence" series consists of about 40 items. Some are bills, newspaper clippings, or financial reports, but most are letters. Most date from 1911 to 1914. The were written by different clergy in the Society of Saint Charles Scalabrinians: Francesco Morassi (1861-1911), first pastor of Saint Lazarus; long-time Saint Lazarus pastor Father Ludovico (Luigi, Louis) Toma (1882-1961); Father Luigi Forlani (1874-1915); Father Vittorio Gregori (1881-1930), who as pastor of Sacred Heart parish in Boston was a neighbor of</p>	<p>Box 2</p>

Series IV: Publications

Father Toma's; and Father Pio Parolin (1879-1970), who substituted for Father Toma at Saint Lazarus when Father Toma took a European vacation that was inadvertently extended by the onset of World War I. They were mostly written to the same person, Father Antonio Demo (1870-1936), long-time pastor of Our Lady of Pompei in Greenwich Village in New York City and provincial superior during the 1910s.

The letters are numbered 18-233, with many numbers in that sequence missing. It is not clear if someone gathered letters at Saint Lazarus and then removed over one hundred of them or if there was another collection from which these were removed to Saint Lazarus, then relocated to the CMS archives.

Series IV: Publications**Box**

2

Scope and Contents note

Series IV contains publications as follows:

Saint Lazarus Diamond Jubilee history published in 1967 with extensive history and historical and contemporary photographs (2 copies).

Souvenir journal of the Church of the Sacred Heart in Boston, Massachusetts, published on the church's ninetieth anniversary in 1979 with parochial school photographs and greetings and advertisements from parish families and businesses.

Da Leonardo a Marconi, published in Italy in the 1930s and marketed to those in the Italian diaspora. Consisting of 233 pages of text and photographs, it intended to document Italian achievement across various fields.

The Story of St. Lazarus Church, a pamphlet published in 1921.

Series V: Miscellaneous 1926-1962**Box**

2

Scope and Contents note

Series V comprises eight items:

Series V: Miscellaneous

A May 6, 1926, letter of congratulations from Father Toma to William Henry Cardinal O'Connell on the latter's twenty-fifth anniversary as Archbishop of Boston, on the letterhead of the Church of the Sacred Heart, Boston.

Prayers for First Holy Communion, undated leaflet, circa 1940s.

Envelope and letterhead for the Scalabrinians' provincial residence in New York City, circa 1950s.

Souvenir prayer card for the fifeieth anniversary of Scalabrini Father Luigi Franchinotti, 1960.

Two copies (typescript and carbon) of a transcript of an article on the Rev. Louis Toma Youth Center, circa 1960.

Photograph of a parochial school graduation class surrounding Father Toma, circa late 1940s or early 1950s.

Newspaper tearsheet with a story of Father Toma's fiftieth anniversary as a priest, dated May 16, 1957.

Newspaper clipping about the Saint Lazarus Cinema Club, November 13, 1962.