THE DIGITAL ARCHIVES PROJECT

Preserving
Researching
Connecting
Engaging

The Center for Catholic and Dominican Studies
at Providence College
The Digital Archives Project of CCDS

Embracing technology that provides access to the past and collaboration for the future

As the Center for Catholic and Dominican Studies expands its collection, it has begun seeking new ways both to increase its resources within limited space and to provide access to its collection from outside the campus community. The movement of Phillips Memorial library to an expanded digital collection in both its archival collections and its newer “Digital Commons” prompted the Center to begin negotiations with the same digital provider that the library was using. The partnership of Iron Mountain and Kirtas Technologies, using the YOOLIB software for its market, provided the perfect means to begin The Digital Archives Project for the Center for Catholic and Dominican Studies. As this process began, the Center was also approached to see if it was interested in digitizing a collection of episcopal documents on Catholic Social Teaching, a collection that represented every single official document from an episcopal conference written between 1891-1991 on any element of Catholic Social Teaching (the collection was gathered to honor the centennial of the groundbreaking document *Rerum Novarum*).

The Center is now uniquely poised: on the one hand, we can begin the preservation of rare works on Dominican history and thought while also making them accessible to the world; on the other, we can become the focal point of teaching and learning for issues of Catholic Social teaching. By preserving our past, we can become an international locus for research, study, and collaboration well into the future.

PRESERVING

**PRESERVATION OF RARE BOOKS AND SPECIAL COLLECTIONS**

The Provincial Archives currently contain an array of texts and collections that are in dire need of preservation before their viability begins to wane. From the Center’s point of view, these texts are valuable resources for the growth and expansion of the Center’s impact and position not only within the campus community but also in its outreach to the wider Catholic community. Some of the texts that will be preserved in the first phase of the project include, but are not limited to:

- Commentaries on Aquinas, especially in relation to his treatise on sacraments.
- Works dedicated to the life and witness of various Dominicans in the Americas, including Rose of Lima, Bartolome de las Casas, and Luis de Granada.
- Firsthand accounts of the Jesuits in Japan.
- Commentaries from the early 17th century looking at the life of the Church in the aftermath of the Council of Trent.
- The *New York Freeman’s Journal and Catholic Register* (one of the only complete sets of the journal in the United States).

THE SCOPE OF THE PROJECT

- The preservation of books categorized as incunabula (published before 1501)
- The preservation of 16th-19th century books, approximately 350 texts
- The digitization of the collection of episcopal records on Catholic Social Teaching gathered by the University of Fribourg (1891-1991)
- The digitization of Catholic periodicals and newspapers currently stored in the Provincial Archives
- The preservation of liturgical books, both Catholic and Dominican, ranging from the 15th century to the 20th century
- The digitization of works by and about Dominicans in the Americas currently unavailable to the general public
- Connecting the collection to other archival collections at the Dominican Houses of Studies in Washington, DC, and in Oakland, CA
- Connecting the collection to other Dominican works at Dominican University, Ohio Dominican University, and other Dominican Institutions both in the United States and abroad.
YOOLIB

YOOLIB is a software development company based in Pessac, France. Its online digital software has revolutionized digital collections. Their searchable digital platform allows for annotation, group collaboration, connectivity to other collections, and digital means to convert text from a source into a file format.

KIRTAS TECHNOLOGIES

Kirtas Technologies is the sole distributor of YOOLIB software in the United States. In partnership with Iron Mountain, Kirtas Technologies provides the digitization services for archival collections, including the establishment of metadata for each source. Specifically, Kirtas has the ability to digitize old and rare books with its robotic scanners that can carefully create images of our original sources without damaging the original text.

IRON MOUNTAIN

Iron Mountain is the nation’s leader in secure data storage and has partnered with Kirtas to begin the digitization of archival collections. They provide safe and reliable means to transport the collection, safeguard its integrity during the digitization process, and provide backup files for all of our digital collection.

RESEARCHING

ENHANCED RESEARCH CAPABILITIES

The potential that is given to us by the use of the YooLib technology combined with the services provided by Kirtas Technologies and Iron Mountain is nothing short of monumental. The digitized files that will be produced from our archival sources will allow researchers to access works that, in some cases, have never been available to them. More importantly, this technology allows researchers to collaborate together in their research. The creation of a comprehensive and searchable index will allow researchers to find information and references in minutes rather than in months. Moreover, the creation of a digital archive of resources will attract various scholars toward the Center and the College. The proposed digitization of the Episcopal Catholic Social Teaching Documents would mark Providence College as a premier institution for research for anyone doing studies within the arena of Catholic Social Teaching.

CONNECTING

CONNECTING DOMINICAN INSTITUTIONS AND COLLECTIONS

In 2010, the Master of the Order, Fr. Bruno Cadore, O.P., remarked that Providence College was in a unique position to become the center of a network of Dominican institutions of higher learning throughout the world. The establishment of The Digital Archives Project is the first step in that goal. Already, the Center has reached out to Dominican Houses of Studies in Washington, DC, and in Oakland, CA. In one stop, students and scholars will be able to log into The Digital Archives and access texts from collections across the United States and the world.

ENGAGING

ENGAGING STUDENTS AND PROFESSORS IN NEW PROJECTS

Student engagement is a hallmark of the Providence College education. The creation of The Digital Archives Project takes that engagement to the next level. For instance, history and theology professors will now be able to assign a group of students to an archival text that only they can annotate, producing notes on the page that only they can see. Texts that were previously limited in their access can now be shared easily and professors across disciplines will now have resources that many have never seen before.
**PHASES of the INITIAL PROJECT:**

- **Phase I: Set Up and Launch of Digital Archive**  $15,000
- **Phase II: Major Digitization of Rare and Special Books**  $75,000
- **Phase III: Digitization of American Periodical and Historical Collection**  $20,000
- **Phase IV: Liturgical Books of the Order and the Church**  $30,000
- **Phase V: Fribourg Collection on Social Justice**  *tentative*
  (currently seeking permission from the University to access this collection)