**WESTERN NEW YORK ARCHIVISTS**

**MINUTES OF May 16, 2024, MEETING**

**BUFFALO STATE ARCHIVES, BUFFALO, NY**

**PRESENT:** S. Claire, Jessica Anderson, Jason Barone, Kathleen DeLaney, Dan DiLandro, Dennis Frank, S. Mary Serbacki, Robin Raphael, S. Jean Thompson, S. Mara Walton, Ellen Winger, Heidi Ziemer

Welcome and Introductions: Dan welcomed everyone to SUNY Buffalo State University. For the benefit of newer members we did a round of introductions and were happy to welcome Robin Raphael. Robin is working with the archives of the Network of Religious Communities.

2024/2025 Meetings: The following dates and locations were decided for the upcoming year (all meetings are scheduled for 10:00 a.m.-noon):

* Thursday September 19, 2024 at the Catholic Center
* Thursday January 9, 2025 at Stella Niagara
* Thursday May 22, 2025 at St. Bonaventure University

Discussion: Much of our time was taken up with a discussion of the recent developments concerning the archives at Canisius. Kathleen explained that a decision seems to have been made to close the archives. She, herself, is retiring, but at this time it seems that there will be no one hired to take over her position. At this time, also, the archives is not to accept any donations of material, provide reference service, etc. It is not known for certain what these decisions/actions will mean in the longer term, but for now everything points to elimination of the archives.

All present expressed dismay at what this means for the university and its legacy as well as the record of the Jesuit presence, and the record of the wider Buffalo and Western New York communities which have not only been impacted by Canisius but also documented in the collections housed in the archives. We discussed the possibility of writing a letter to the university administration and/or the Board of Trustees, as well as the library. This would express our support for the archival program and its importance; the value of the collections, the presence of Canisius on the East Side of Buffalo and its involvement in so many peace and justice issues. Heidi and Jason will work on a draft of the letter; Kathleen will be a resource for facts. Once prepared, the draft will be circulated to all members of WNYA for review before moving forward. It was suggested that the letter could also be circulated more widely, including the media, in order to let people know what is happening and to, perhaps, raise more support for the archives.

The above discussion led to further conversation on how to preserve the legacy of our various organizations (the record of service, the charism and values, etc.) which is documented in our respective archives. This is becoming a more vital issue as many organizations and religious congregations and institutions are coming to completion. There was some talk about different collaborative ventures which are being developed particularly to care for the collections of congregations of religious women and men. Mary spoke briefly about the in-process Franciscan Central Archives to be located in Chicago, the program at Boston College, a collaborative forming in Cleveland, and another in South Bend at St. Mary’s College. These are just a few of the projects underway.

There was conversation about the general value of archives and how this can be expressed to those who use the collections as well as those that fund them.

**NEXT MEETING:** S. Jean will host the next meeting at the Catholic Center on September 19.

**REMINDER: CHECK OUT THE WNYA WEBSITE--** <http://www.archives.sbu.edu/wnya>