

# Catholic Club of Philadelphia records, 1871-1923

MC 23

## Summary Information

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<b>Repository</b>	Philadelphia Archdiocesan Historical Research Center
<b>Creator(s)</b>	Catholic Club of Philadelphia
<b>Title</b>	Catholic Club of Philadelphia records, 1871-1923
<b>Collection number</b>	MC 23
<b>Dates</b>	1871-1923
<b>Extent</b>	3 Boxes, 0.8 Lin. Ft.
<b>Language</b>	English

## Abstract

The Catholic Club of Philadelphia, formerly the De Sales Institute of Philadelphia, was founded January 2, 1877. The Club offered wealthy men of a certain socioeconomic background cultural, intellectual, and social opportunities.

This collection contains administrative records, including by-laws and reports, as well as general correspondence. Programs, souvenirs, and ephemera related to club-sponsored events and events sponsored by other local Catholic societies are also included. The collection also contains newspaper clippings, N.C.W.C. news releases from May- July 1923, and miscellaneous pamphlets, cards and circulars.

## Background note

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Proposed in May 1875, the Catholic Club of Philadelphia, formerly the De Sales Institute of Philadelphia, was organized January 2, 1877 and opened at 1403 Locust Street. The club, one of many founded in major cities throughout the country during the late 19th century, offered wealthy men of a certain socioeconomic background cultural, intellectual, and social opportunities. These clubs sponsored balls, concerts, lectures as well as other events and activities that raised large sums of money for local church charities.

The Catholic Club appears to have had strong and sometimes overlapping ties with several other Philadelphia Catholic societies and associations, including the American Catholic Historical Society, the Catholic Philopatrian Literary Institute, and the Hibernian Society.

Like other Catholic male fraternal societies and elite clubs, the Catholic Club of Philadelphia tried to keep its distance from the bishop in order to maintain its financial independence and decision-making authority. During the first couple decades of the 20th century, dioceses tried to consolidate their charities, urging clubs to work with newly-formed charitable bureaus. It appears that the Catholic Club died out during this period of time.

## **Bibliography**

Oates, Mary J. *The Catholic Philanthropic Tradition in America*. Indiana University Press, 1995.

## **Scope and Content**

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The collection contains administrative records, including a minute book documenting the club's early years (1872-1876), by-laws, reports, and lists of elections and officers.

It also contains incoming and outgoing correspondence of which a significant amount is postcards. A majority of these postcards documenting club news, events and activities as well as invitations are addressed to Charles F. Devenny, a member of the Board of Directors.

Programs, souvenirs, and ephemera related to club-sponsored events and events sponsored by other local Catholic societies are also included. The collection also contains newspaper clippings, many of which document club events and activities, as well as letters of appeal for Catholic charities.

Miscellaneous pamphlets, cards and circulars, many of which do not appear to be directly related to the Catholic Club, are also included.

## **Controlled Access Headings**

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### **Corporate Name(s)**

Catholic Club of Philadelphia  
American Catholic Historical Society of Philadelphia  
Catholic Philopatrian Literary Institute  
Hibernian Society

### **Form/Genre(s)**

Correspondence  
Ephemera  
Minute books  
Pamphlets

Postcards  
Programs  
Souvenirs

**Geographic Name(s)**

Philadelphia (Pa.)

**Personal Name(s)**

Devenny, Charles F.

**Subject(s)**

Catholics--Pennsylvania--Philadelphia.  
Catholic Church--United States--Charities--History  
Catholic Church--Societies, etc.

**Related Materials**

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At the Philadelphia Archdiocesan Historical Research Center:  
Catholic Club of Philadelphia, Associations Collection (AC0047)

**Finding aids**

An earlier finding aid is also available in hard copy at PAHRC.

**Administrative Information**

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**Restrictions**

The collection is open for research.

**Acquisition information**

Accession number 1990.023

**Preferred citation**

Cite as: [Indicate cited item or series here], Catholic Club of Philadelphia records, 1871-1923 (MC 23), Philadelphia Archdiocesan Historical Research Center.

**Processing note**

Finding aid updated by Faith Charlton, Assistant Archivist, April 2011.

Preservation copies of the newspaper clippings should be made.

Some oversized materials, specifically the N.C.W.C. News Sheets, should be separated and housed in oversized boxes.

## Collection Inventory

	<b>Date</b>	<b>Box</b>	<b>Folder(s)</b>
Minute book	1872-1876	1	1
By-laws, reports, souvenirs, lists of elections and officers	1877-1919	1	2
By-laws, reports, souvenirs, lists of elections and officers	1877-1919	1	3
Incoming correspondence	1885-1889	1	4
Outgoing correspondence	1877-1919, undated	1	5-6
Postcards and invitations concerning club news and events (most addressed to Charles F. Devenny)	1871-1903	1	7-8
Programs, invitations, and ephemera related to Club-sponsored and other local events	1877-1905	2	1-4
Letters of appeal for Catholic charities	circa 1880-1893	2	5
Miscellaneous newspaper clippings	circa 1880-1900	2	6
Miscellaneous pamphlets, circulars and ephemera	1871-1923	2	7-8