

Very Rev. John J. Lardner, P.S.S., Papers

Biographical Note:

Rev. John Joseph Lardner (1893-1948) was the eldest of eight surviving children born to Irish immigrant parents, John Lardner and Catherine Cyran Lardner. He was raised in Baltimore, Maryland, and educated at Loyola College, St. Mary's Seminary, and the Sulpician Seminary of Washington, D.C., where he entered the Society of St. Sulpice and was ordained to the priesthood in 1920. He earned his licentiate in Theology from Catholic University of America in 1921 before making his Solitude, 1921-1922. After brief assignments at the Sulpician seminaries in Washington, D.C., and Baltimore, he was sent to Rome to earn his doctorate in theology at the Angelicum. He returned to the United States in 1927 and was assigned to the faculty of St. Mary's Seminary, where taught philosophy and theology until his appointment as rector at St. Patrick's Seminary, Menlo Park, California, in 1930, where he remained for the next four years. He was recalled to Baltimore in 1934, where in addition to his teaching duties, he served as Vice-President and rector, a position he held until his appointment as acting provincial in 1943. (Disruptions caused by the Second World War would delay his official appointment until 1945.)

During his term as provincial, Rev. Lardner negotiated agreements with the Archdioceses of Honolulu and Detroit to staff new seminaries: St. Stephen's Minor Seminary (1946-1970) in Kaneohe, Hawaii, and St. John's Provincial Seminary (1949-1988) in Plymouth, Michigan, a major seminary to serve the dioceses that comprised the Province of the Archdiocese of Detroit. Despite failing health, Rev. Lardner undertook a visitation of Sulpician houses in the western part of the country in the fall of 1948. It was during his stay at St. Edward's Seminary in Kenmore, Washington, that he suffered a fatal heart attack.

This collection contains both official and personal papers, including correspondence, subject files, homilies, and materials regarding the seminary course of studies. Languages used in the collection include English, French, and Latin.

Abbreviation keys can be found on the last page of the collection box list and correspondence indices.

Bibliography

Christopher J. Kauffman. *Tradition and Transformation in Catholic Culture: The Priests of Saint Sulpice in the United States from 1791 to the Present*. Macmillan, 1988.

Entry for Rev. John J. Lardner, *2019 Necrology of the Society of St. Sulpice, Province of the United States*. Accessed online: <http://sulpicians.org/project/lardner-father-john/>.

Extent: 2 records storage boxes

Date range: 1886-1948 [bulk: 1927-1948]

Scope & Content:

Series 1: Correspondence

Subseries 1.1: General, c. 1920-1948 – 6 folders

This subseries contains general correspondence that covers almost all his priestly ministry and has been arranged alpha-chronologically by correspondent. See the indices created for the incoming and outgoing correspondence for the names of the individuals with whom Rev. Lardner corresponded and a brief description of the letters' contents.

Subseries 1.2: Subject Files, c. 1927-1948 – 8 folders

This subseries contains correspondence placed in files organized by subject to centralize letters regarding a specific individual or organization, including the Rev. Vladimir Alexandrof (1870-1945), a Russian Orthodox priest who converted to Roman Catholicism in 1933 and took up residence at St. Mary's Seminary, and Rev. Arthur W. Terminiello, an alumnus of St. Mary's Seminary who founded the Christian nationalist organization, the Union of Christian Crusaders. Files are arranged alphabetically by subject.

Series 2: Society of St. Sulpice

Subseries 2.1: Canada, c. 1945-1948 – 1 folder

This subseries contains correspondence exchanged between the U.S. and Canadian Sulpician communities during the period that Rev. Lardner was provincial of the U.S. Sulpician community.

Subseries 2.2: France, c. 1940-1948 – 1 folder

This subseries contains correspondence between the U.S. and French Sulpician communities over the period, 1940-1948, and is largely comprised of letters and documentation exchanged between the Procure in Rome (Rev. Roger Jeune, PSS) and the Superior General of the Society (Very Rev. Pierre Boisard) during the time that Rev. Lardner was a priest and later provincial of the U.S. Sulpician community. (Please note that the Second World War delayed the election of a new Superior General.) Much of the correspondence is in French and is arranged alpha-chronologically by correspondent.

Subseries 2.3.1: United States - General, c. 1932-1948 – 10 folders

This subseries contains correspondence and subject files relating to the U.S. Province of the Sulpicians that covers the period Rev. Lardner was provincial of the U.S. Sulpician community, as well as some material that predates his term in office. Files placed in the General subseries are regarding Province-wide matters, including correspondence with members of the hierarchy and information on U.S. Sulpician membership and appointments.

Subseries 2.2: United States – Sulpician Houses, c. 1931-1948 – 24 folders

This subseries contains correspondence and materials regarding the operation of Sulpician-run seminaries and institutions, including St. Patrick's Seminary & University (Menlo Park, CA); St. Joseph's College (Mountain View, CA), Divinity College of the Catholic University of America; the Sulpician Seminary of Washington, DC (later renamed Theological College of The Catholic University of America); St. Stephen's Minor Seminary (Kaneohe, HI); St. Mary's Seminary & University (Baltimore, MD); St. John's Provincial Seminary (Plymouth, MI), and St. Edward's

Seminary (Kenmore, WA). Sulpician House files are arranged alpha-geographically by state and city, and alphabetically by institution name there under.

Series 3: Homilies, Meditations, and Talks

Subseries 3.1: Homilies, c. 1934-1935, n.d. – 3 folders

This subseries contains homilies written by Rev. Lardner on a variety of topics. The homilies have been arranged alphabetically by subject and title and are largely undated. A subject/title list has been prepared.

Subseries 3.2: Meditations, c. 1918-1941, n.d. – 7 folders

This subseries contains meditations, written by Rev. Lardner over the course of his priestly training and ministry on a variety of topics. The meditations have been arranged alphabetically by subject or title and are largely undated. A subject/title list has been prepared.

Subseries 3.3: Talks, c. 1931-1947, n.d. – 1 folder

This subseries contains notes and drafts of talks given by Rev. Lardner during the period he served as rector of St. Patrick's (Menlo Park, CA) and St. Mary's (Baltimore, MD) seminaries and as provincial of the U.S. Sulpicians. Talks are arranged alphabetically by subject or title. A subject/title list has been prepared.

Series 4: Personal

Subseries 4.1: General, c. 1893-1989 – 1 folder

This subseries contains personal and family records.

Subseries 4.2: Clerical Studies, c. 1918-1935, n.d. – 12 folders

This subseries contains the files maintained by Rev. Lardner that date from his time as a student through his assignments as a faculty member of a seminary, that includes course and lecture notes and subject files. The bulk of the materials are in English, with some Latin and French. Materials are arranged alphabetically by subject or title (in accordance with the seminary curriculum) and language.

Subseries 4.3: Subject Files, c. 1906-1938, n.d. – 4 folders

This subseries contains subject files created by Rev. Lardner on a variety of topics including clerical conferences and proselytizing.

Series 5: Printed Materials, c. 1835-1945 – 8 folders

This series contains assorted printed material found with Rev. Lardner's papers, largely on religious and spiritual subjects, including a signed copy of Cardinal James Gibbons' "The Ambassador of Christ."

Note: Materials created by and relating to Rev. Lardner can be found in the three collections that comprise the Associated Archives at St. Mary's Seminary & University.