



*The following is the finding aid for the RENEW collection located at the Archdiocese of Milwaukee Archives. A finding aid is a catalog tool used in archives that briefly describes the material found in a collection. These records are not available digitally unless otherwise noted.
[Researchers must make an appointment with an archivist to view the material.](#)*

RENEW (Archdiocese of Milwaukee)
Records, 1979-1985
AS 7

Volume
2.3 cubic feet

Access
Open/unrestricted

Administrative Note

After seeing the success of the first RENEW program in Newark, NJ in 1978, Archbishop Rembert Weakland brought the program to Milwaukee. The RENEW effort began on December 19, 1979 when Archbishop Weakland appointed Auxiliary Bishop Richard J. Sklba to direct the Milwaukee Archdiocese RENEW effort. RENEW involved liturgical celebrations, large group instruction and small group discussions with the goal of fostering spirituality on a parish and personal level. RENEW was a response of the archdiocese to the call of the Second Vatican Council to grow in the holiness required by the challenges of the age.

RENEW was designed to exist for three years, with a preceding year of leadership training. During the three years of programming there were five six-week seasons, each exploring a spiritual theme in the spring and fall of each year. The program formally began in March 1980 when the RENEW staff began meeting with parish councils and their staffs to explain the RENEW program and obtain a commitment of a "core" group from each parish that would be the nucleus of the RENEW effort. In early 1981 these groups received overnight training and during the spring and summer of 1981 began planning and organizing the programs at each parish. The first RENEW season began in October 1981, followed by subsequent seasons in Lent 1982, Fall 1982, Lent 1983, and Fall 1983.

The goals of the RENEW program were to renew Christian living through fostering witnesses to the message of the scriptures, to form vibrant faith communities, and to promote social justice. During the six-week season, the RENEW staff presented a series of themes and basic truths of faith. Parishioners discussed these themes at the small and large group meetings. RENEW began the program at the parish level with with the Sunday Celebration of the Eucharist at the beginning of each season. The following week parishioners had the opportunity to join small groups, large groups and obtain take-home materials.

Over 200 parishes and nearly 40,000 people participated in the small group sessions during the Fall 1981, Lent 1982, and Fall 1982 seasons. Although the RENEW program met with an enthusiastic response, it was not without critics. RENEW's methods and emphasis on social justice met with harsh criticisms. Conservative elements of the Church attacked it as being overly humanistic, sinister, anti-Catholic, and Marxist. After surviving these criticisms during the first season in 1981, RENEW completed its four remaining seasons and fulfilled its mission in 1983. In 1983 the RENEW program completed its mission. At that time the office of Religious Education absorbed the remnants of RENEW's responsibilities.

Scope and Content *a brief description of the types of materials in the collection.*

This collection documents the RENEW program of Southeastern Wisconsin from 1979-1985. It gives a detailed picture of the program's efforts to "renew" the spirituality of parishes and their parishioners through a "core" group of members in each parish, small and large group discussion and activities, take-home materials and the establishment of prayer networks at the parish level by core members trained by the RENEW staff. Director Auxiliary Bishop Richard J. Sklba, Associate Director Mariangela Pledl, and Administrative Assistant Arlene Schlapman created the majority of these records, which pertain largely to the tasks of encouraging the RENEW program at the parish level, training the core groups from each parish, and coordinating RENEW's celebrations for each RENEW season. Files contain general correspondence, news clippings, newsletters, training materials, training sessions, program materials, outreach and celebratory activities, and parish logs, which give some information as to what was occurring at each parish.

Box and Folder List *This is a list of folders names within the collection. The folders have been arranged alphabetically by topic. "B" is an abbreviation for box and "F" is an abbreviation for folder. This list will help the researcher narrow down exactly what folder they want to look at.*

Box	Folder Title
B 1	Agency Presentation to Archdiocesan Offices, 1980
B 1	Agency Presentation to Parish Councils, 1980
B 1	Budget, 1980-1981
B 1	Budget, 1981-1982
B 1	Budget, 1982-1983 (2 folders)
B 1	Celebrations - September 27, 1981
B 1	Celebrations - October 1, 1981
B 1	Celebrations - October 11, 1981
B 1	Celebrations - February 7, 1982
B 1	Celebrations - September 26, 1982
B 1	Celebrations - November 7, 1983
B 1	Celebrations - November 20, 1983
B 1	Correspondence - General, 1979-1985 (2 folders)
B 2	Correspondence - Paulist Press, 1979-1985
B 2	Discipleship and Empowerment Workshop, 1982
B 2	District Contacts - Core Planning Responses, 1983
B 2	District Contacts - Parish Renewal Contacts, 1984
B 2	Empowerment Training Sessions, 1982
B 2	Ethnic Group Prayer Material - Croatian, n.d.
B 2	Ethnic Group Prayer Material - German, 1980
B 2	Ethnic Group Prayer Material - Hispanic, 1981
B 2	Ethnic Group Prayer Material - Italian, n.d.
B 2	Ethnic Group Prayer Material - Polish, 1981
B 2	Ethnic Group Prayer Material - Slovenian, 1980
B 2	Ethnic Group Prayer Material - Vietnamese, 1980
B 2	Evaluations - Small Group (Maureen Gallagher Study), 1983
B 2	Evangelization at MECCA, 1983
B 2	Evangelization at MECCA Handouts, 1983
B 3	"Good News" Statements from Core Groups, 1981
B 3	Hispanic Program Materials - Hispanic "RENEW," 1981-1982
B 3	Hispanic Program Materials - Spanish, n.d.
B 3	Leadership Training - Small Groups, 1982

Box	Folder Title
B 3	Leadership Workshop - Introduction to Second Season, 1981
B 3	Listening/Sharing Sessions, 1983
B 3	Mailing List, 1984
B 3	Miscellaneous - Archdiocese Small Groups, 1983-1984
B 3	Miscellaneous - Campus Ministry, 1980
B 3	Miscellaneous - District Membership Lists, n.d.
B 3	Miscellaneous - Green Bay RENEW, 1981
B 3	Miscellaneous - Mass Schedule, 1982-1983
B 3	Miscellaneous - RENEW Memorandums, 1979-1981
B 3	Miscellaneous - Retired Diocesan Priests, 1982
B 3	Miscellaneous - Trademark, 1981
B 3	Miscellaneous - Volunteer Information, n.d.
B 3	Miscellaneous - Weekend Information, 1980-1981
B 3	Miscellaneous - Women Religious Directory, 1981-1982
B 3	Music - Music Reprint Permission, 1980-1983
B 3	Notebook, 1981-1984
B 3	Organizational and Training Manual, 1980
B 3	Papal Blessing, 1981
B 4	Parish Book - Season 1, 1981
B 4	Parish Book - Season 2, 1982
B 4	Parish Book - Season 3, 1982
B 4	Parish Book - Season 4, 1983
B 4	Parish Book - Season 5, n.d.
B 5	Parish Logs - Districts 1-4, 1981-1982
B 5	Parish Logs - Districts 5-8, 1981-1982
B 5	Parish Logs - Districts 9-12, 1981-1982
B 5	Parish Logs - Districts 13-16, 1981-1982
B 5	Parish Logs - Tentatively Bad News (Parishes not involved in RENEW), 1981-1982
B 5	Phon-a-thon - Training, 1983
B 5	Phon-a-thon - Volunteers, 1983
B 5	Program Material - Rewrite of All Material, n.d.
B 5	Program Material - Rewrite of Small Group Material, 1981
B 5	Program Outline, 1980
B 6	Publicity, 1981-1982
B 6	Publicity - Adverse, 1981
B 6	Publicity - Bernadine Guild, 1982-1983
B 6	Publicity - <u>Catholic Herald</u> , 1981-1982
B 6	Publicity - Newspaper Articles, 1981-1982
B 6	Publicity - Racine Parishes, 1981
B 6	Publicity - Thomas Moore Educational Association, 1982-1983
B 6	RENEWS, 1981-1984
B 6	Sacred Contracts, 1981 (2 folders)
B 6	Salary Administration Committee, 1983
B 6	Seasons - Post RENEW, 1980-1982
B 6	Seasons - Season 1 Suggestions, 1982
B 6	Seasons - Season 3 Materials, 1978-1982
B 6	Seasons - Season 4 Materials, 1980-1982
B 6	Seasons - Season 5 Materials, 1982
B 7	Spirituality - Prayers, 1980-1981

Box	Folder Title
B 7	Spirituality - Spirituality Speakers, n.d.
B 7	Training Manuals, Archdiocesan - Semester 1, 1981
B 7	Training Manuals, Archdiocesan - Semester 2, n.d.
B 7	Training Manuals, Archdiocesan - Semester 3, 1982
B 7	Training Sessions - Evening, 1981
B 7	Training Sessions - Miscellaneous, 1980-1981
B 7	Training Sessions - Overnight, 1981
B 7	Training Sessions - Small Group and Scripture Centers, 1982-1983