The Church of the Sacred Heart, South Plainfield, officially opened its archives on June 13, 2015, in a ceremony attended by parishioners, local politicians, and distinguished archivists.

Fr. John Alvarado, pastor, opened this historic event with prayer and a blessing of the archives. Program speakers, Mitzi Hozjan, representing the Diocese of Metuchen Commission for Historical Records, and Dr. Alan Delozier, Seton Hall University Archivist and Executive Director of the New Jersey Catholic Historical Commission, addressed those in attendance about the inestimable value of parish archives and praised Sacred Heart for its commitment to archiving the history of the parish. Mr. Robert Golon, project archivist, gave an overview of the organization and contents of the collection: “The challenges we faced at the beginning of our work were no different than those I’ve encountered in my previous archival work,” said Mr. Golon. The ceremony concluded with South Plainfield Mayor, Matthew Anesh, presenting a Proclamation to the church honoring the occasion.

Robert Golon was assisted by Sr. Kathleen Rooney, S.S.J., and Sr. Nadine Boyle, R.S.M., during the eight years it took to bring the collection to publication and to make it available for public access. “This was a vast undertaking,” said Sr. Kathleen, “but we persevered; document by document, certificate by certificate, photo by photo, and we succeeded in having what I believe to be one of the most professional parish archives in the Diocese of Metuchen.”

The collection begins in 1901, with the bulk of material dating from 1950 to 2015. By archival measurement, Mr. Golon estimates the size of the collection to be 80 linear feet.

The Finding Aid for the archives is located on the parish website, www.churchofthesacredheart.net. The opening displays were available for viewing during the months of June and July. Please contact Sr. Kathleen at 908-756-0633, ext. 142 to access the archives for research purposes.
Church of the Sacred Heart, South Plainfield, official opening of parish archives, June 13, 2015

Standing, from Left: Mitzi Hozjan, Commission for Historical Records, Diocese of Metuchen; Patrick J. Diegnan, Jr., NJ State Assemblyman; Robert Bengivenga, Councilman; Robert Golon, Project Archivist; Matthew Anesh, Mayor; Elizabeth O’Hara, RSM, Delegate for Religious, Metuchen Diocese; Dr. Alan Delozier, Seton Hall University Archivist and Executive Director of the New Jersey Catholic Historical Commission; Fernanda Perrone, Archivist for Rutgers University Special Collections and University Archives.

Seated: Sr. Nadine Boyle, R.S.M., curator; Sr. Kathleen Rooney, S.S.J., Pastoral Associate and curator; Rev. John Paul Alvarado, pastor.