

CATHOLIC NEWS ARCHIVE

Collaborating to support Academia and
Individual Communities

Digital Initiatives Symposium 2019 - University of San Diego,
April 30th

History of CNA

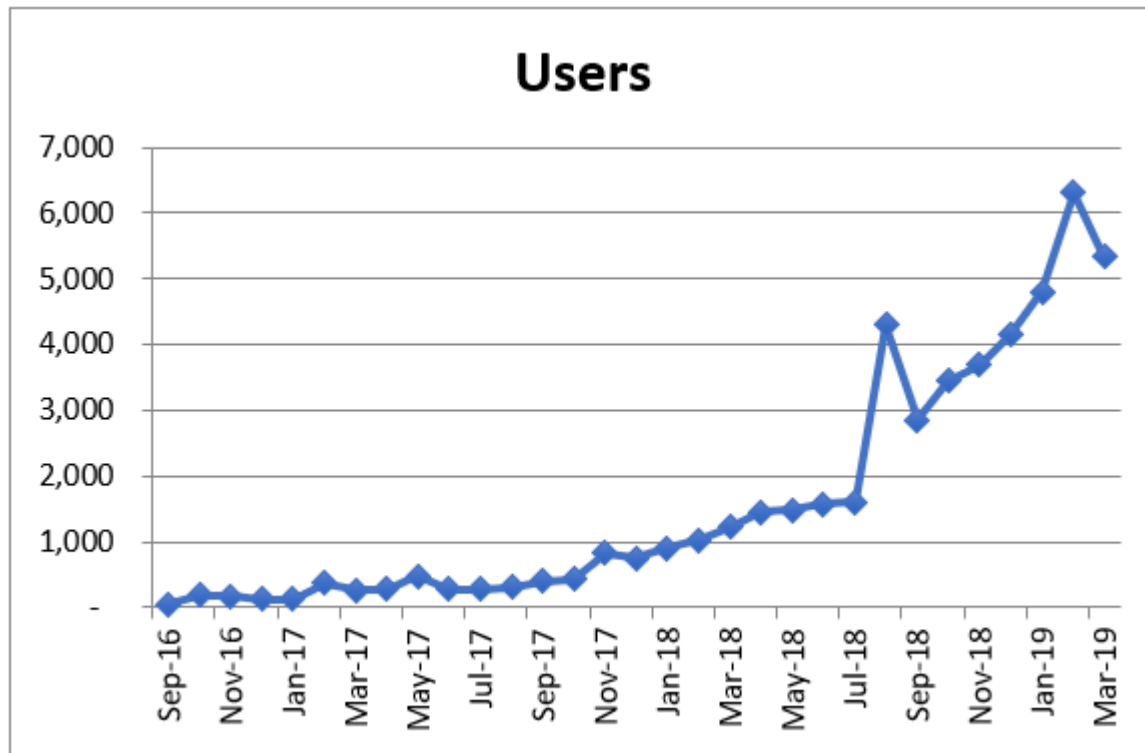
- A Project of the Catholic Research Resources Alliance (CRRA)
 - Currently a collaborative non-profit of 51 members and partners
 - USD is a member
- Began in 2011 with funding from 25 Founders
 - USD is also a Founder
- Also received 2 grants from the Catholic Communication Campaign of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops
- Created a Catholic Newspapers Committee
- Identified all Catholic newspapers in N.A.
- Began digitization efforts on a base set of 12 priority newspapers

Motivation for the Project

- There was a clear need voiced by researchers for the content
- No previous targeted effort to digitize this content
- The content was scattered, on microfilm and brittle if in print
- Catholics represent 20% of the population in the US
- Diocesan newspapers are just behind parish bulletins as the widely used communication tool in the Catholic Church
- CRRA Founders, appreciating the need, were committed to creating an open access repository for this content.

Growth in Size and Use

CNA collection contains 14,928 issues comprising 402,633 pages



In March, 5,338 users visited the site for a total of 26,015 pages views

Content from across the US in CNA

A Partial List of CNA Content

- Catholic Worker (National)
- National Catholic Reporter (National)
- Catholic Transcript (Hartford, CT)
- The Monitor (San Francisco)
- Clarion Herald (New Orleans)
- The Voice (Miami)
- Shepard of the Valley (St. Louis)

Other Content that could be added

- List of over 800 N. American Catholic Newspapers

Positives about the Project

- All open access
- A Collaboration between a range of different libraries and archives
 - Academic
 - Diocesan
 - Religious Congregations
- CRRA provides encouragement, guidance, and support to others interested in digitizing Catholic content
 - Some institutions are doing the digitization themselves
- There is a pathway for growth that could represent over 25 million pages
- Single platform allows researchers access to study issues and historical events from national and local sources at the same time as well as do text mining

More Positives

- Capturing content from both national and local sources
 - Local sources represent both local concerns as well as local perspectives about national issues
 - Local sources provide access to local histories of the Catholic Church as well as the families involved in those Dioceses.
- Current members of the local Churches have access to their preserved history
- CNA has received very positive responses from researchers who are finding value in the archive
- There is interest on the part of other Bishops and papers to participate in this project.

Challenges currently being faced

- Ongoing Funding and Support for the Archive
 - Impacts the rate of scalability
- Promoting the use of the CNA beyond CRRA members
- Locating viable digitizable content
 - Lots of content not on microfilm
- Copyright issues
 - Negotiating post 1923 content with copyright holders
- Competition for the content from Commercial Providers
 - Interested in part of the papers thus putting all of it behind a paywall
 - Profit motive of some Dioceses
- Convincing Dioceses that there is value in participating
- Probably won't be able to do all of the papers

Positives are worth the Challenges

- Growth in use and responses from users are positive
- There is a clear societal benefit to the project
- It serves all researchers (academic and non)
- It represents more than just a research database, it is a historic record of communities
- It is committed to staying open access
- And there are many more opportunities ahead

Thank you!

- Thank you
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