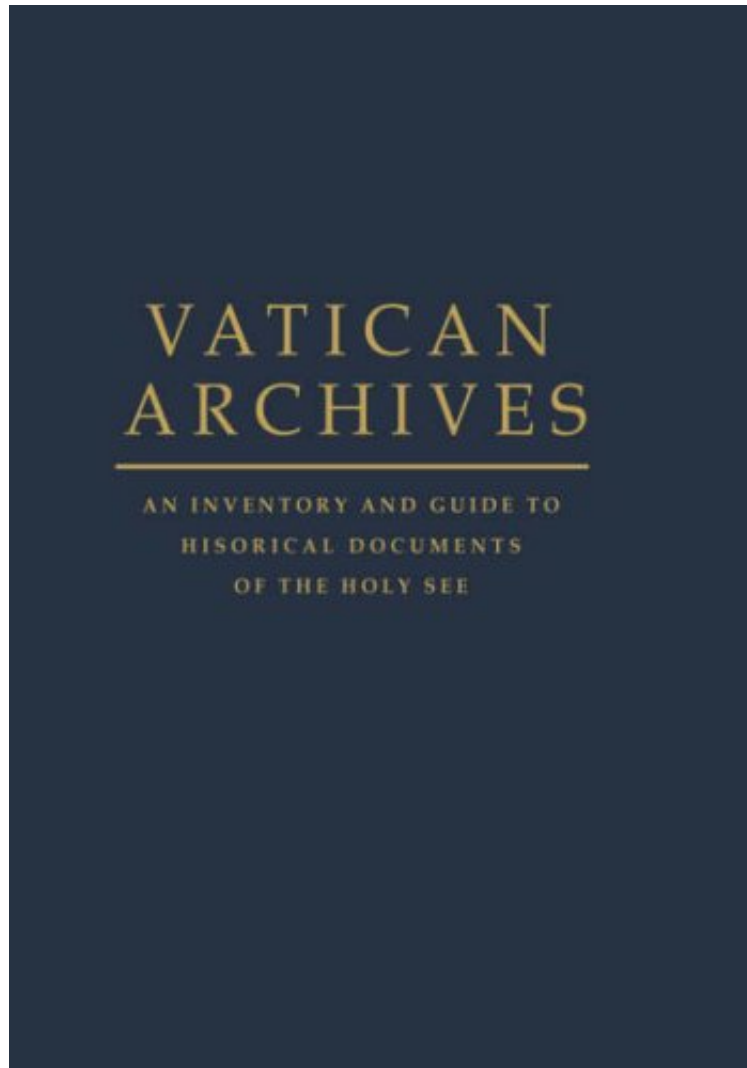


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Vatican Archives: An Inventory and Guide to Historical Documents of the Holy See

From Francis X Blouin

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guides exist.) It "provides a comprehensive overview of extant historical documentation generated by the Holy See since the 9th century." (from the forward)-and does so in a clear, lucid way. There is a complete introduction including a carefully structured discussion of how to use a volume such as this. Documents are generated by each of the various agencies of the Vatican. These include the College of Cardinals, the Papal court, the Roman Curia, Offices, such as "camerlengo", Tribunals, Apostolic Nunciatures, Papal States, The Congregations, Commissions, and many more. These papers are placed in the Archives, and this Index essentially tells you, the researcher, where they are. The true size of the Vatican Archives is astonishing: it is said they occupy some 35 miles of shelf space. Under just one listing in the chapter, The Roman Curia, we find a reference, 3.1.6.28, to 90 linear metres of shelfspace, containing 1044 volumes. Under the next, 1451 volumes. Each listing includes a history, an analysis of how the materials are organised, the scope of the material, and a discussion of references. Not here is any of the material pertaining to a Secret Archive, now the stuff of fiction books. This is the real thing. NOTE: read the introduction carefully! It is very helpful if you have a background in Archival Work. The science is subtle, and the author acknowledges it. 5 Stars

Vatican Archives provides the first comprehensive guide to one of the richest archival sources for the history of the Western world. Organized into related agency groups, it includes approximately 500 entries that describe the purpose and workings of each administrative agency of the Vatican and the official records it produces-- the very records that now constitute the archives. Serving as a research tool that provides a systematic and previously unavailable overview of the archives, this book enhances and expedites access by scholars in a broad range of disciplines.

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