

### **The Archivist's Report to the 229th Convention**

We continue processing the vast collection of the Diocese of New Jersey, slowly and steadily. And just when we think there may be (some day) an end to the work, we'll receive a considerable number of cubic feet of material — cubic feet being the way that archivists measure size — from parishes that have been closed. The processing of closed parish materials is a delicate one. There are items that must be preserved in perpetuity, such as parish registers, service books, vestry minutes, and the like, but there are other materials whose fate is less certain. What correspondence from rectors or vicars does one preserve? What photographs? And how about service leaflets, parish newsletters, and special event materials? Every closed parish or mission is treated on a case-by-case basis and we try to make wise decisions. In a perfect world, we would save everything. But the world, alas, is far from perfect and — given the square footage at our disposal — we often preserve less than we'd like.

The difficult and complex project of the conservation and restoration of the circa 1815 episcopal vestments of the Right Reverend John Croes, first bishop of New Jersey — his rochet, chimere, and scarf — is nearly done. It was a painstakingly slow process. The work was entrusted to a highly regarded textile conservator in the Washington DC area, who worked with Smithsonian Institution on the conservation of the gowns of the First Ladies.

With regard to artefacts, the Diocese of New Jersey was able, through a stroke of eBay luck, to acquire a very rare miniature of the Reverend Thomas Bradbury Chandler (1726-1790), long-time rector of Saint John's Church in Elizabeth. Bradbury was a seminal figure in the history of the Episcopal Church, an early and strenuous proponent for a bishop for the colonies. After the American Revolution he was asked to be first Bishop of Nova Scotia, but he refused, owing to ill health, and remained at St John's Church until his death in 1790. His daughter, Mary Goodin Chandler, married John Henry Hobart, the great third Bishop of New York.

There are virtually no known portraits of Chandler, so this miniature — painted as mourning brooch for a member of Chandler's family — is a significant and important accession.

Respectfully submitted,

Canon Cynthia McFarland

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