**Msgr. Hugh Michael Beahan Collection**

**Abstract:**

This is a small collection of material relating to the interesting life of Monsignor Hugh Michael Beahan, a Catholic priest for the diocese of Grand Rapids who was active in the Catholic Church from his ordination in 1947 up until his death in 1980. Msgr. Beahan was very well known for his media presence, working in radio, television, and print in support of the diocese of Grand Rapids and the Catholic Church. This collection has a wide volume of material relating to this, as well as the foundation named in his honor and his connection to the St. Andrews School in Grand Rapids, with him having served at St. Andrews Cathedral in his later years.

Collection #: 3

Donor: Robert C. Woodhouse Jr.

Span Dates: 1945-2008

Size: .75 Linear Foot

Processed by: Alex Ruhlman, Jennifer Morrison

**Biography:**

Monsignor Hugh Michael Beahan, known to many as “Father Mike”, was born in Ionia, Michigan on March 24, 1920 and attended St. Peter & Paul school in Ionia until High School, where he graduated from Lowell High School in 1938. He attended St. Joseph Seminary School until completing his studies in 1942. After this, he attended St. Mary’s University in Baltimore until leaving in 1945 to work as a broadcaster on WOOD radio in Grand Rapids. However, in 1946 he returned to St. Mary’s and finished his studies and was eventually ordained as a Catholic priest in 1947. Upon being ordained, his first placement was in Muskegon, Michigan, where he stayed until 1950. It was during this time that he also worked at WKNK radio in Muskegon. From 1950-51 his placement was in Cadillac, MI, and from 1951-52 in Cheboygan, MI. In 1953 he became one of the first clergymen in the Midwest to extensively use the television when he started his show “Fifteen with Father” on WOOD-TV, which aired until 1979. Additionally, in 1955 he oversaw the first televised Mass from St. Andrews Cathedral, also on WOOD-TV, as well as his “Father Mikes Music Room” radio show on Grand Haven’s WGHN. His main connection to Aquinas was through his management of the WXTO radio station that was broadcast from the Aquinas Campus from 1962-72. After this, he served as an editor for the Western Michigan Catholic where he wrote his “Mike Side” column. His final placement was at St. Andrews Cathedral from 1975-1980. In 1978 he was diagnosed with Hodgkin’s Lymphoma, which he eventually succumbed to on July 22, 1980. Shortly before his death, he was given the honor of being named a Protonotary Apostolic by Pope John Paul in 1979, which is second only to being named a Bishop.

**Scope and Content:**

This collection holds a nice variety and volume of many aspects of Msgr. Hugh Michael Beahan’s adult life. There is a large amount of information regarding his involvement with the media, both through his work with radio, television, and print. Especially, there are summaries of his column “Mike Side”. In addition, there is a sizable amount of material relating to his revered public speaking skills through the form of transcripts of notable speeches and audio and video recording of several of these speeches. In addition, there is a great volume of material relating to the Msgr. Hugh Michael Beahan Foundation which was named in his honor. This includes annual reports and correspondence between members and the board of directors amongst other things. There is also a good amount of clippings surrounding his life and especially his death, with his obituary material and memorial material having a wide variety and volume. Overall, this collection is a voluminous record of Msgr. Hugh Michael Beahan’s adult life. However, one category it lacks is a wide volume of material regarding his early life, specifically his childhood and his life during his first placements after being ordained in 1947.

**Contents:**

**Box Folder Description**

1 1 **Biographical Information**

**Photographs**

1 2Class of 1940

1 3 Photos of Beahan (1976, most undated)

1 4 **Speaking/Sermons** (1964-1984)

2 Disks (Let’s Talk About You/Thanksgiving, n.d.; God Be With

You, 8/28/80)

1 5 **Columns**

(Mike Side, The Pastor’s Corner/Page, 1973-1980)

1 6 **Clippings** (1978-1980)

1 7 **Memorial Material** (1980)

2 VHS tape and disk

**Hugh Michael Beahan Foundation**

1 8 Literature (1982-2008, n.d.)

1 9 Publications (Newsletter and annual reports, 1994-1996)

1 Binder Various documents 1998-1999

2 1983 PSA

1 10 **St. Andrews School Material**

Various documents 1991-1998, n.d.

(Note: Box 2 contains all and only audio-visual material)