IN THE NEWS – January 30, 2026

BENEDICTINE ARCHIVISTS VISIT



On January 23, 2026, we welcomed Sister Rebecca Abel, OSB, archivist at the Benedictine Monastery in Ferdinand, Indiana, to the Ritter Birthplace. Sister Rebecca, second from left in photo, and her archive colleagues spent the day here followed by a visit to St. Mary of the Assumption Catholic Church, home parish of young Elmer Joseph Ritter.

Several years ago, we received a 1935 oil painting of young Bishop Ritter by Sister Gregory Ems, OSB. Ritter had been ordained Bishop in 1933. In time, the sisters gave the painting to their male counterparts at neighboring St. Meinrad Benedictine Seminary/Monastery where the future cardinal studied. In 2021, archivist Fr. Meinrad Brune entrusted the painting to us.

Sister Rebecca and her staff were eager to see Sister Gregory's painting, elegantly reframed, on display in the *Cardinal Ritter Center*. They asked about the restored building and its vintage front parlor and upstairs birth-room displaying Eastlake Style Victorian furniture of 1892, the year of Elmer Ritter's birth.



In the Museum Room, they view four wall panels that outline Cardinal Ritter's life: *The Early Years* – home and schooling: *Emerging Leadership* – priest, bishop, archbishop; Outreach and Reform – ecumenism and religious freedom; *The World Stage* – Vatican II and liturgical reform.

Ritter Birthplace Foundation archivist Ray Day and immediate past chair John Blocker hosted the visit. Ray brought their visit to a close by discussing museum expansion plans that will feature numerous vestments worn by Ritter in both Indianapolis and St. Louis and a collection of artifacts that will soon be on permanent loan to the Cardinal Ritter Birthplace.

Ray Day – 1/30/2026