

MARY'S SHRINE

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America's Catholic Church

Mary's Shrine

BY REVEREND MONSIGNOR WALTER R. ROSSI, J.C.L.



Each week at Mary's Shrine, I meet with our executive staff to review events from the past week, the current week, and what will take place in the weeks ahead. At the staff meeting following the Fourth of July, I began by thanking the staff for the beautiful Mass we celebrated in thanksgiving for the 250th anniversary of the founding of our Nation. Afterward, I announced, "Summer is over!" This, to the dismay of many! At this writing, however, my words ring true as you now have the Fall/Winter edition of *Mary's Shrine* in your hands, schools are back in session, the days are becoming shorter, and before we realize it, we will bid farewell to another year.



The American flag flies from the Knights Tower at Mary's Shrine

Geraldine M. Rohling

Although there are times that are busier than others, especially around holy days, feast days, and pilgrimages, Mary's Shrine is never a quiet place. It is a dynamic, living place, filled with all the accompanying sounds and activity every day of the year. Pilgrimage and school groups, multi-cultural gatherings, and special events continue to fill our pews with faithful devotees of Our Lady. It is a good problem to have when we must add extra chairs for a Mass, or juggle our calendar to accommodate requests, or calm a visitor who was unable to find a parking space. All these circumstances affirm that Mary's Shrine remains a vibrant center of faith in the life of American Catholics and even those beyond our borders.

Our Lady's powerful intercession draws her children to her house in our nation's capital, where pilgrims are found, often with tears in their eyes, as they pour out their hearts to our loving Mother, confident that she will assist them in their need.

Each of us has our own needs, our own concerns, and our own preoccupations. We also have common concerns, such as the state of our Union and that of the world. In this year, when we celebrate the 250th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence, we



Matthew Barriok

Pilgrims fill the Great Upper Church

As the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington, D.C., is not a parish church but a pilgrimage church, a sanctuary of prayer and Marian devotion, and because it is in our nation's capital, it is also a tourist church. With that, there really is no summer break. Our doors are open to the faithful, no matter what the season, providing a respite from the outside world and an encounter with God through quiet prayer and the celebration of the sacraments of the Eucharist and Reconciliation. In this, we are always guided by the maternal care of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

also mark the 25th anniversary of the 9/11 attacks on our nation. As we recall this tragic event, we honor the nearly 3,000 lives that were lost, and we pay tribute to the heroic first responders. This anniversary is also an opportunity to educate the more than 100,000 million people who were born since the 11th of September 2001 so that the horrific events of that sad day are never forgotten. At the same time, we are all reminded that life is short; that it is a gift of immeasurable value that needs to be protected at every stage.

The 9/11 anniversary is a call for all people to work for peace, a reality for which we still strive in our own land, as well as throughout the world. While our own efforts might seem limited, we have the greatest instrument for obtaining peace within ourselves: the ability to pray. As our Holy Father, Pope Leo has reflected and advised, “Prayer calls us to leave behind whatever violence remains in our hearts and minds. Let us turn to a Kingdom of peace that is built up day by day – in our homes, schools, neighborhoods, and civil and religious communities. A Kingdom that counters polemics and resignation through friendship and a culture of encounter. Let us believe once again in love, moderation, and good politics. We must form ourselves and get personally involved, each following our own calling. Everyone has a place in the mosaic of peace!” (Vigil for Peace, April 11, 2026)

In this sesquicentennial year of our country and the 25th anniversary of the 9/11 terrorist attacks, the Church commemorates the 800th anniversary of the death of Saint Francis of Assisi. Known as an “artisan of peace,” Saint Francis promoted harmony by preaching reconciliation, welcoming social outcasts, and even crossing battle lines to meet with the Sultan of Egypt



Franciscan friar blesses Ground Zero Cross

during the Crusades in an effort to bring about peace. Saint Francis taught that peace requires work, such as forgiving injuries, healing social divisions, and reaching out to the marginalized and the poor. The famous “Prayer of Saint Francis” embodies his spirit of turning hatred into love and despair into hope.

Let us “get personally involved” and take our “place in the mosaic of peace” by invoking the intercession of Saint Francis to make us “instruments of peace” through our prayers for peace, and petitioning the Blessed Virgin Mary, the Queen of Peace, to bring peace to our troubled world.

Allow me to suggest that in these last months of 2026, you make the Prayer of Saint Francis a daily one of your own:

PRAYER OF SAINT FRANCIS

Lord, make me an instrument
of your peace;

Where there is hatred,
let me sow love;

Where there is injury, pardon;

Where there is doubt, faith;

Where there is despair, hope;

Where there is darkness, light;

And where there is sadness, joy.

O Divine Master,

Grant that I may not so much seek

To be consoled, as to console;

To be understood, as to understand;

To be loved, as to love;

For it is in giving that we receive,

It is in pardoning that we are pardoned,

And it is in dying that we are born to Eternal Life.

Amen. 🙏



MISSION STATEMENT

The Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception, a Catholic church dedicated to the patroness of our nation, is a place of worship, pilgrimage, evangelization and reconciliation. It offers visitors the occasion for a deepening conversion, a step forward in the journey to God, with Mary as the model for that journey. This monumental church, raised by Catholics of the United States because of their devotion to Mary the Mother of God, gives visibility to their faith and Catholic heritage. Mary’s Shrine invites people from across the country and beyond into the saving moment of faith, hope and charity, so that they may be reconciled and transformed into living symbols of Christ’s presence in the world. It is here that the faithful gather to worship God, give honor to Mary, and are sent to spread God’s word wherever they go. 🙏

Celebrating America's 250th Anniversary

On July 4, 2026, patriotic pilgrims filled the Great Upper Church of the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception for a Mass of Thanksgiving marking the 250th anniversary of the founding of the United States.

Welcoming the faithful to Mary's Shrine, Monsignor Walter Rossi, Rector of the Basilica, said, "We gather in this great patronal church to offer the most perfect prayer, the Mass, in thanksgiving to God for this land and the freedoms which are ours."

Cardinal Donald Wuerl, Archbishop Emeritus of Washington, Chair of the National Shrine Preservation Trust Board of Directors, and principal celebrant and homilist, reflected on symbols and dimensions of our freedom. "As our flag and fireworks are signs of our liberty on Independence Day," he said, "so, too, the altar and the celebration of Mass are signs of our greater liberation, our spiritual redemption."

He reminded the congregation that while the Declaration of Independence proclaims the right to live in freedom, pursue peace, and seek happiness, the Gospels show us how to live that

freedom, "empowered by the Holy Spirit to build a world of truth, kindness, mercy, justice, forgiveness, peace, and love."

Among the concelebrants was Archbishop Gabriele Caccia, Apostolic Nuncio to the United States, who read a letter from Pope Leo XIV before the final blessing. The Holy Father extended his "heartfelt congratulations to all Americans," praying that "the spirit of 1776 continue to inspire hope and unity" as he entrusted the nation to the intercession of the Immaculate Conception, Patroness of the United States. 🇺🇸



America's Catholic Church celebrates the nation's historic 250th anniversary

Robert Isaacson

Memorial Mass: Honoring the Fallen

"If anything brings us to this magnificent basilica this afternoon, it is to render homage to the men and women who have so faithfully served our country," said Archbishop Timothy Broglio of the Archdiocese for the Military Services, USA, during the 32nd Annual National Memorial Mass celebrated on May 17, 2026.

He continued, "We gather to pray for the eternal rest of those fallen in war; for those who served, returned, and later died of old age or infirmity; for those who carry the wounds of war in their bodies, hearts, and minds; and for the priests who served in the military, the VA, or the Foreign Service and have been called back to the Father's house."



Matthew Barrick/Archdiocese for the Military Services, USA



Posting of the Colors and the Sounding of *Taps*

At the conclusion of Mass, *Taps* sounded throughout the Great Upper Church, solemnly honoring the fallen. 🇺🇸

Consecration of the Nation to the Sacred Heart

Welcoming the faithful gathered in the Crypt Church and those who participated from across the country via broadcast, Monsignor Walter Rossi, Rector of the Basilica, said, “We are pleased to join the Bishops of the United States in consecrating our nation to the Sacred Heart as we celebrate the 250th anniversary of its founding. On this Solemnity, may our hearts be configured to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, which Pope Leo tells us symbolizes God’s merciful and infinite love for every human being.”



Archbishop Timothy Broglio Celebrating the Solemnity of the Sacred Heart of Jesus

of the Archdiocese for the Military Services, USA, and a member of the National Shrine Board of Trustees, served as principal celebrant and homilist of the Mass. In his opening remarks, he reflected that amid the festivities surrounding this historic anniversary, “we as believers stop and consecrate our land to the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus,” acknowledging the nation’s dependence on God

and giving thanks for His many blessings.

Later, Archbishop Broglio emphasized that anniversaries are not only occasions to reflect on the past but also opportunities for renewal. As the nation was consecrated to the Sacred Heart, he urged the faithful to consecrate themselves as well, recommitting their lives to Christ’s “burning heart of love for God and for humanity.” 🕊

National Eucharistic Pilgrimage

Themed “One Nation Under God,” the 2026 National Eucharistic Pilgrimage commemorated the 250th anniversary of the United States by traversing the East Coast to link historic Catholic sites in prayer for the nation.

Beginning in St. Augustine, Florida, on Memorial Day, the pilgrimage traveled through many of the original thirteen colonies before concluding in Philadelphia during the Fourth of July weekend. Along the way, it visited Mary’s Shrine to celebrate the Vigil of the Solemnity of the Most Holy Body and Blood of Jesus Christ.

Monsignor Walter Rossi, Rector of the Basilica, welcomed Bishop-elect Gary Studniewski of Washington, principal celebrant of the Mass, the nine perpetual pilgrims, and the faithful



Pilgrims pray during the National Eucharistic Pilgrimage Mass

who gathered in the Great Upper Church. He prayed, “May Christ draw closer to us this evening through His Eucharistic presence, and may Mary Immaculate, Mother of the Eucharist, intercede for all our needs.” 🕊

Matthew Barrick/Knights of Columbus

Praying for Peace with Pope Leo XIV

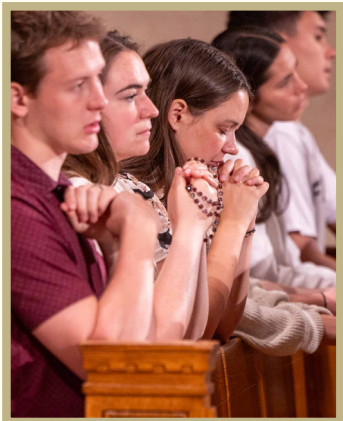
Vigil for Peace

In what would be his final Mass at Mary’s Shrine as Apostolic Nuncio to the United States, Cardinal Christophe Pierre served as principal celebrant and homilist for the Prayer Vigil for Peace on April 11, 2026, in response to Pope Leo XIV’s invitation during his Easter Sunday *Urbi et Orbi* address.

Cardinal Pierre reflected, “Today, here in the National Shrine, we gather with a particular intention: to unite ourselves with the Holy Father in Rome and the whole Church to pray that hearts may open again to dialogue and that violence may give way to reason.”

He urged the faithful to become witnesses to Christ’s peace, reminding them that “Peace in the world is not separate from conversion of heart. The Christian must ask not only that nations be converted, but that I, myself, be converted.”

Monsignor Walter Rossi, Rector of the Basilica, implored the intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary as “conflicts continue in the Middle East, Sudan, Ukraine, Yemen, and other countries throughout the world.” He prayed, “May Our Lady, the Mother of the Prince of Peace, present our earnest plea for peace this day before her Son.” 🌹



Young adults pray for peace

Rosary for Peace

Archbishop Gabriele Caccia, the newly appointed Apostolic Nuncio to the United States, presided over his first liturgy at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception with the Holy Rosary for Peace on May 30, 2026.

Invited by the Vatican to participate in the worldwide Rosary for Peace, Mary’s Shrine livestreamed the recitation of the Rosary from the Great

Upper Church to the Vatican Gardens, where Pope Leo XIV prayed simultaneously.

Before the Rosary began, Archbishop Caccia addressed the faithful, saying, “Dear brothers and sisters, in communion with the Holy Father, following the example of the first Christian communities, we lift up to the Lord, through the intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary, unceasing supplications for peace in the world.”

Introducing the Rosary from Rome, Pope Leo said, “We are gathered here together with so many pilgrims present at Marian shrines throughout the world, to pray to the Lord that He may grant peace to peoples and nations.... Let us earnestly implore the gift of peace.” 🌹

UPCOMING PILGRIMAGES TO MARY’S SHRINE

September 12	Indian American Catholic Association
September 13	Croatian Catholic Community
September 19	Diocese of Greensburg
September 26	Dominican Rosary Pilgrimage
October 3	Our Lady of Aparecida
October 10	Conventual Franciscans
October 17	Diocese of Paterson
October 18	Our Lady of Pilar
October 23	Diocese of Bridgeport
October 24	Diocese of Richmond
November 7	Diocese of Camden
November 14	First Catholic Slovak Union
December 5	Haitian Apostolate
December 12	Archdiocese of Washington Walk with Mary

Welcoming the Relics of St. Bernadette

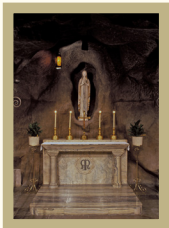
Mary's Shrine is honored to host the relics of St. Bernadette Soubirous on September 18–20 on their first stop of the 2026 U.S. tour of this great saint to whom the Blessed Mother appeared and revealed, “I am the Immaculate Conception.”

In addition to venerating St. Bernadette's relics in the Great Upper Church, the faithful are invited to engage in the Lourdes Immersive Experience in the Chapel of Our Lady of Lourdes, located on the Crypt Level. There, pilgrims may touch a rock from the Grotto and, with water from Lourdes, follow Our Lady's instruction: “Go to the spring, drink and wash yourselves there.” Afterward, candles may be lit in the Lourdes Chapel to entrust personal intentions to the Blessed Mother.

An Opening Mass will be celebrated on Friday, September 18, at 12:10 p.m.



St. Bernadette's relics at the Grotto in Lourdes, France



Crypt Church Chapel

by Cardinal Robert McElroy, Archbishop of Washington. On Saturday, September 19, Archbishop Timothy Broglio of the Archdiocese for the Military Services, USA, will celebrate Mass at 4:30 p.m. and, as in Lourdes, lead the faithful in a candlelight procession. The Closing Mass will be celebrated on Sunday, September 20, at 12 noon by Archbishop Gabriele Caccia, Apostolic Nuncio to the United States, after which the relics of St. Bernadette will depart Mary's Shrine.

All are invited to this historic visit of the relics of St. Bernadette and the Lourdes Immersive Experience. No tickets or reservations are required.

For those unable to attend, each Mass will be livestreamed on the National Shrine's website at nationalshrine.org/mass. 🕯️

UPCOMING BASILICA BROADCASTS ON EWTN *(all times Eastern)* ALSO LIVESTREAMED AT [NATIONALSHRINE.ORG/MASS](https://nationalshrine.org/mass)

September 11	Mass of Remembrance on the 25th Anniversary of 9/11	5:15pm
September 19	St. Bernadette Reliquary Mass & Candlelight Procession	4:30pm
September 26	Dominican Rosary Pilgrimage Mass	4:30pm
November 1	Solemn Mass of All Saints	12 noon
November 2	Concert in Commemoration for All the Faithful Departed	6pm
December 8	Solemn Mass of the Immaculate Conception	12:10pm
December 24	Choral Meditations on the Nativity	10pm
December 24	Solemn Mass of Christmas Eve	10:30pm
December 25	Solemn Mass of Christmas	12 noon
January 21	National Prayer Vigil for Life Opening Mass	5pm
January 22	National Prayer Vigil for Life Closing Mass	8am

Outdoor Way of the Cross Dedicated

Dedicated on Laetare Sunday, the Outdoor Way of the Cross is the newest devotional space at Mary's Shrine. Located on the Basilica's north grounds near Mary's Garden, it offers pilgrims a place for prayer and reflection on Christ's Passion.

A spiritual gift from longtime Shrine benefactor Dr. Daisy Lin, the Outdoor Way of the Cross features the traditional fourteen stations depicting Christ's Passion and Death. At its center stands a statue of the *Welcoming Jesus*.

Cardinal Christophe Pierre, Apostolic Nuncio to the United States who dedicated the Outdoor



Monsignor Rossi, Dr. Daisy Lin, and Cardinal Pierre

Way of the Cross, reflected, "If we walk the Way of the Cross remembering that Christ is leading us into participation in His Passion, then the devotion of this path leads us to Him."

Monsignor Walter Rossi, Rector of the Basilica, expressed the hope that "those who pray here will be united more closely to the Lord Jesus as they walk the *Via Dolorosa*."

Invoking the intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary, he prayed, "May Our Lady of Sorrows, who stood at the foot of the Cross, stand with us this day and place our needs before her Son." 🌹



The Outdoor Way of the Cross offers a new devotional space for pilgrims who visit Mary's Shrine

A Simple Way to Strengthen the Mission You Love

Every day, pilgrims come to Mary's Shrine seeking hope, healing, prayer, and a deeper relationship with Our Lord through the Blessed Virgin Mary. Through the generosity of faithful supporters, the Basilica continues its mission of welcoming pilgrims, celebrating the sacred liturgy, fostering evangelization, and providing a place of prayer and spiritual renewal.

One meaningful way to support this mission is through a Donor Advised Fund (DAF). A DAF is a simple, tax-efficient charitable giving account that allows you to recommend grants to the organizations you care about, including

the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception.

If you already have a Donor Advised Fund, we invite you to consider recommending a grant to Mary's Shrine. Your generosity helps ensure that this sacred place remains a beacon of faith where millions of pilgrims encounter Christ, deepen their faith, and experience the loving intercession of Our Blessed Mother.

For more information about making a gift through your Donor Advised Fund, please contact the Basilica's Office of Development. Thank you for your faithful support of Mary's Shrine and its mission. 🌹

Milestones at Mary's Shrine

Sisters Servants of Mary Immaculate 40 Years of Service to Mary's Shrine

Rarely seen because they work behind the scenes, the Sisters Servants of Mary Immaculate have served as the sacristans of the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception for 40 years.

Natives of Poland and proud citizens of the United States, the "Sister Sacristans" have worked seven days a week, 365 days a year, serving Mary's Shrine with great love and devotion for four decades.

The Sisters care for the altar linens, liturgical vestments, sacred vessels, lectionaries, sacramentaries, flowers, candles, hosts, water, wine, and more before and after every Mass celebrated at the National Shrine—more than 2,000 each year.

Their ministry also includes preparing for Eucharistic Adoration, Ordinations, Religious

Professions, Pilgrimages, and even the papal visits of Pope Benedict XVI in 2008 and Pope Francis in 2015.

The Sisters Servants of Mary Immaculate are vital not only to the daily operations of Mary's Shrine but also to its mission. Their quiet, faithful service has touched the lives of millions of pilgrims over the past 40 years. 🌹



From left to right: Sister Bernadette Kozyra, SSMI; Sister Maria Adamczyk, SSMI; Sister Claudia Kupis, SSMI; and Sister Anna Kaszuda, SSMI

Dr. Peter Latona, Director of Music 25 Years of Dedication to Mary's Shrine

For 25 years, Dr. Peter Latona has served the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception as Director of Music with exceptional dedication and distinction. As a composer, conductor, and organist, he has set the highest standard of sacred music within the Roman Catholic liturgy. Since 2001, he has built the nation's preeminent Catholic music program at Mary's Shrine, *America's Catholic Church*.

In 2015, Pope Francis awarded Dr. Latona the *Pro Ecclesia et Pontifice* medal, one of the Holy See's highest honors bestowed upon clergy and



Dr. Peter Latona

laity for distinguished, long-term service to the Catholic Church. Dr. Latona's compositions were performed during the Apostolic Visit of Pope Benedict XVI to the United States in 2008 and in every city visited by Pope Francis during his 2015 Apostolic Visit.

Most recently, Dr. Latona was named National Pastoral Musician of the Year by the National Association of Pastoral Musicians, which praised him as "a master organ improviser and recitalist, a brilliant conductor who champions repertoire both ancient and modern, and a composer whose unique gifts for melody, harmonic color, and form have produced sacred choral works of lasting beauty." 🌹

Choir of the Basilica 60th Anniversary

In 2026, the Choir of the Basilica celebrates 60 years of service to the National Shrine. Founded in 1966 as the Shrine Chorale, the choir began with 40 local volunteer singers.

Today, the Choir of the Basilica is composed of sixteen professional singers from the greater Washington, D.C., metropolitan area. Performing nearly 100 times each year, the choir prepares approximately 300 works each season drawn from the rich tradition of Roman Catholic sacred music.

Under the direction of Dr. Peter Latona, the Choir of the Basilica has earned acclaim throughout the United States and around the world, particularly



through its live performances and livestreamed broadcasts. Experience the beauty of the Basilica Choir each Sunday at the 12 noon Mass, on Holy Days, and in concert, either in person or online. For a schedule of upcoming concerts and livestreams, visit nationalshrine.org/events. 🌹

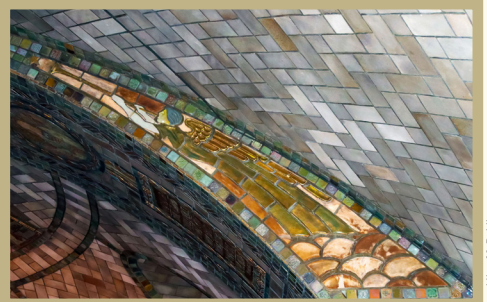
THE PENTECOST APSE OF THE CRYPT CHURCH

Geraldine M. Rohling, PhD, MAEd, DSG
Archivist-Curator Emerita

The east apse of the Crypt Church is dedicated to the fruits of the Holy Spirit, the third person of the Blessed Trinity, as portrayed by the early Church. Liturgically, it is celebrated as the Pentecost, the solemnity traditionally referred to as the birth of the Church. It represents the fulfillment of the prophecy of John the Baptist who spoke of “One mightier than I” who would “baptize ... with the Holy Spirit and fire” (Luke 3:16). Most importantly, it is the fulfillment of the promise of “the One,” Jesus, who would “ask the Father to give another Helper” (John 14:16-17) to the world. This affirms the New Covenant, in which the law of God, as prophesied by Jeremiah, is written on human hearts rather than stone tablets: “I will place my law within them and write it upon their hearts; I will be their God, and they shall be my people (Jer 31: 33). It is the fulfillment of the prophecy of Ezekiel: “Moreover, I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; and I will remove the heart of stone ... and give you a heart of flesh” (36: 26). This apse is the culmination of the west and north apses; the fulfillment of the promises of the Old and New Testaments; the promise of the Holy Spirit, which, for us, marks the fulfillment of the Passover of Christ, the first fruits of redemption, the seal of salvation, and life in the Church.

Throughout the ceramic artwork of the Crypt Church, Mary Chase Stratton (1867-1961), the creator of the Pewabic ceramic glaze technique, thematically worked towards a true theological depiction of events as understood by the early Church. To this end, she spent an entire summer exploring, studying, and sketching the artwork of the Catacombs of Rome. In the east apse, as in its two sister apses, the artwork is culled from the images and drawings of the early Church that have been preserved in the catacombs.

The east apse is framed by two heralding angels of Pewabic ceramic, the same as the west and north apses. Within the concave of the east apse, Pewabic medallions, panels, and friezes of terra cotta tiles, are incised with deep lines, creating the feel of non-traditional *tesserae* or “mosaic tiles” that give the effect of grand murals.



Heralding Angel

Ceiling Panels

In the center of the ceiling are four panels, each speaks of the gift of the Holy Spirit in relation to Mary and to the Church.



Fons Amoris

Fons Amoris (Fountain of Love) shows a spray of water rising from the center of the fountain. A water source is important to a desert culture such as Judaism and subsequently as a spiritual metaphor it is well understood. The Old Testament is replete with references to water, springs, and fountains. In the New Testament Jesus refers to himself as the source of “living water” (John 4:10). The Church also applies this title to the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of divine unconditional love, the promise of

Jesus. This quote from John is the perfect description for this panel: “The water that I will give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up to eternal life (John 4: 14).

Porta Caeli (Gate of Heaven) is a symbol of the entrance into eternal life and one of the

invocations or titles of the Blessed Mother. For the early Church, it meant that the Holy Spirit assisted people in achieving graces for heaven. We are reminded that it was through Mary that salvation became incarnate upon the earth. In

the Gospel of John, Jesus identifies himself as the gate (John 10: 9).

Sedes Sapientiae (Seat of Wisdom) is also the Spirit of Love. Wisdom is listed among the gifts or fruits of the Holy Spirit. This tablet depicts an

open book upon the throne. Mary is the seat of Infinite Wisdom, of the Divine Word; she is the throne for the Divine Child, who sits upon her lap and is cradled in her arms. In this panel the open book of life rests upon the throne.

Ignis (Fire), a primal element, is a constant symbol of the divine in both Old and New Testaments. It was used by Jesus along with that of water and air to portray the action of the

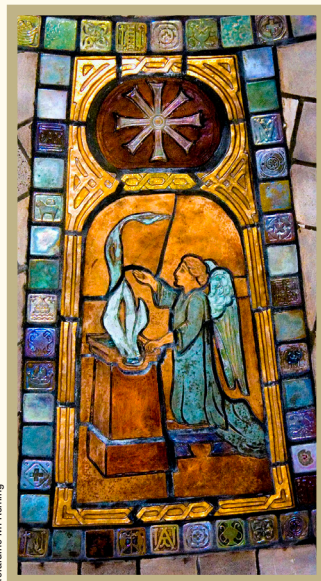
grace of God. It is one of the most familiar depictions of the Holy Spirit: baptism with its tongues of fire (Acts 2: 3-4); the gift that was promised. Here, the Eternal Spirit is symbolized by the flame upon the altar.

Spanning the arch are three panels that carry the text of the

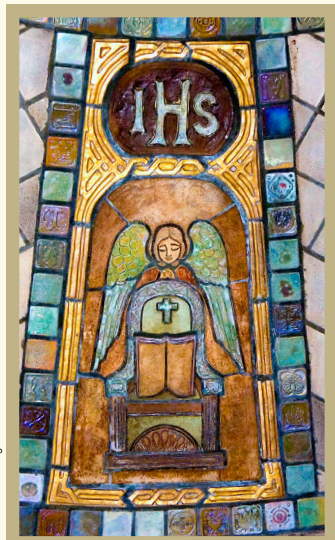
fulfillment prophecy from the Gospel of Luke (1: 35): “The Holy Ghost [sic] Shall Come Upon Thee, And the Power of the Most High Shall Over Shadow Thee, And therefore also the Holy which Shall be Born of Thee, Shall be Called the Son of God.” Acting as spacers for the three text panels are three Medallions of Peter, Mary—the Salve Regina—and Paul.



Porta Caeli



Ignis



Sedes Sapientiae



Salve Regina

Moving from chapel to chapel, the capstones of the marble columns carry phrases from the 12th century prayer, the *Memorare*. Above each capstone a Pewabic frieze depicts a symbol or event relevant to the Church during its first three centuries. They are symbols of the

emerging Church whose fulfillment is in the Holy Spirit as Jesus promised, “And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate” (John 14:16). Jesus was the first Advocate. The second, “another Advocate,” is “the holy Spirit that the Father will send in my name” (John 14: 16, 26).

Friezes

Cervus Desiderans. At the northeast corner of the chapel of Saint Lucy is the emblem of the “longing deer,” described in Psalm 42: 1-3. “As the deer longs for streams of water, so my soul longs for you, O God. My soul thirsts for God, the living God.” This is a depiction of the early Church. The ceiling panel above this chapel is that of the *Fons Amoris*.



Longing Deer

Virgo Deo Consecrate (Virgin Consecrated to God), shows a virgin receiving the veil. It is similar to the 3rd century fresco in the catacomb of Priscilla (2nd-4th century). In the early liturgical writings of Ignatius of Antioch, these women are referred to as a distinct group. These virgin-martyrs, like Lucy in the first chapel, did not live in monasteries or convents. Consecrated virgins were mystically espoused to Christ; dedicated to prayer and service. They wore neither habits nor lived according to “A Rule.”



Virgo Deo Consecrate

Annunciatio (Annunciation), is the moment when the beginning of God’s plan for salvation is announced through the Archangel Gabriel. The oldest known depiction, 2nd century, is also found in the catacomb of Priscilla. The early Christians celebrated the victory of Christ over death. The Annunciation of Mary is the beginning of this message of hope.

Christus et Martyres (Christ and the Martyrs). Martyrdom, an imitation of Christ, was most severe under the Emperors Nero in A.D. 64 and again with Diocletian (A.D. 303-311), with lesser occurrences dispersed intermittently by other rulers. Refusal by Christians to worship Roman gods led to torture and savage, cruel deaths. The apologist Tertullian wrote to the Roman persecutors: “Whenever we are mown down by you, we become more numerous: the blood of Christians is seed” (*Apologeticus pro Christianis*, Ch. 50). Nine of the ten women saints in both the east and west apses are martyrs. Saint Brigid of Kildare was not a martyr but a mitred abbess of the 5-6th centuries. Eucharistic Prayer I, the Roman Canon, names Saint Lucy along with the women of the west apse individually.

Christus et Sancti (Christ and the Saints). This frieze concerns the saints, which is different from the martyrs. The Greek word *hagios* or “saint,” originally referred to *all* Christians. In his letters, Paul addressed the members of the communities as “saints” (Rom 1:7; Phil 1:1). It was at Antioch where disciples were first called Christians (Acts 11: 26). This artistic depiction is understood as Christ and members of the early Christian communities.



Dove with Olive Branch

Dove with Olive Branch, the last frieze, is a reminder of the unconditional faithfulness of God that transcends all time. Augustine wrote that “perpetual peace is indicated by the olive

branch which the dove brought with it when it returned to the ark” (*On Christian Doctrine*, Book II, Ch. 16, §24).



Schudi Organ

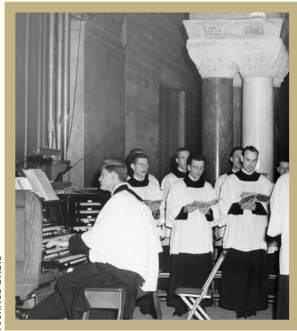
Crypt Church Organ

In 1983, the National Shrine received a generous bequest from the estate of Louis P. Bahner of New York. The funds were used for a much-needed new pipe organ for the Crypt Church. Placement of the instrument, which was critical, would best be determined by the acoustics and the liturgy or how the organ would best “speak” in the space, and its most amicable relationship to the liturgy. It was concluded that both standards would be well-met by situating the organ on a direct line from the altar of Saint Catherine of Alexandria, patroness of scholars and philosophers, in the east apse, to that of Saint Cecilia, patroness of musicians and organists, in the west apse.



Left: Altar of Saint Catherine of Alexandria (East); Right: Altar of Saint Cecilia (West)

An organ had been in use in the Crypt Church since the celebration of the first Mass in 1924. Over the years, it wandered throughout the space in concert with the construction of the church until 1934, when a “Four Manual Vox Organo” pipe organ by Musical Research Products, Inc. of Philadelphia, was installed in the southwest corner of the Crypt Church (today, the Oratory of Our Lady of Ephesus). The organ pipes were in the place now occupied by the two Croatian chapels—Bistrica and Peace—and the console was located next to the west interior back wall. (See photo.) This area was known as “the choir of angels.” Years later, during discussions regarding the placement of the pipe



Vox Organo Pipe Organ, 1954

organ for the Great Upper Church, the composer and organist Russell Woollen (1923-94), whose many instances at the National Shrine included music for the Catholic Hour broadcasts in the

Crypt Church, told of the difficulties having the organ and choir at opposite ends of the church. In 1964, the Vox Organo was no longer viable and was replaced with the Baldwin electronic organ and its five tone cabinets. It had been in the Great Upper Church since the dedication of the National Shrine in 1959. Finally, it too was removed for the installation of the new Schudi pipe organ in 1987.

The theological theme of the east apse is best understood in its relationship to the west and north apses. In two previous issues of *Mary’s Shrine* (2022 No. 2 and 2023 No. 1) I describe and explain the art, architecture, and spiritual resonance of the west and north apses of the Crypt Church. These articles are available online <https://www.nationalshrine.org/blog/the-collected-articles-of-dr-geraldine-m-rohling>.

To experience the Crypt Church in its fullness, plan a pilgrimage with all three of these articles in hand. Take time to read and study all the symbols, stories, and Scripture passages, meditating on the greater story of our salvation as chronicled in these three apses. 🙏

GIFTS FROM MARY'S SHRINE

NATIVITA Christmas Cards



400 Verse Inside: "May the blessings of Christ be with you now and throughout the New Year. Merry Christmas!" Box has 10 cards and envelopes. **\$22.95**

Olive Wood COMFORTING ANGEL

Guardian Angel to comfort, give you strength, hope, and carry your prayers to Heaven



Hand Made in Bethlehem

401 \$6.95

LINEAGE of LOVE NECKLACE



Made in a sacred site in Italy

402 18" \$45.95

ANGEL WINGS Christmas Bell Ornament



every time a bell rings an Angel gets it wings

403 \$12.95

OUR LADY of LOURDES STATUE



404 9" \$59.95

Tiny PEARL ROSARY NECKLACE



405 3mm \$44.95



GLASS PEARL ROSARY & Rosary Bracelet

406 8mm Rosary \$59.95

407 8mm Bracelet \$29.95

Please visit our website at
nationalshrineshops.com

OUR LADY of GUADALUPE Ceramic Floral Bead and Pearl BRACELET



408 \$19.95

GIFTS FROM MARY'S SHRINE

MADONNA & CHILD
Christmas Cards



409 Verse Inside: "May you keep in your heart the miracle of Christmas today and forever." Box has 18 cards and envelopes. **\$22.95**

SAINT MICHAEL ROSARY
God's Archangel



*beautiful
Antique Gold Plated
Saint Michael
Rosary with
8mm Aquamarine
Double Capped
13mm Crystal Bead
Our Fathers*

410 \$99.95

ICON of the NATIVITY
Christmas Ornament



*Made
in
Ukraine*

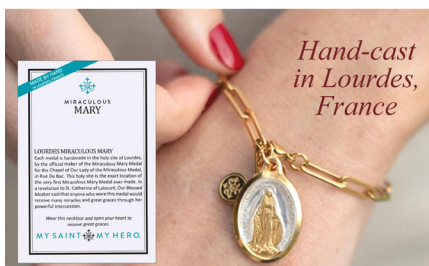
411 \$16.95

INFANT JESUS
with GOLDEN HALO
STATUE



412 6" \$59.95

Lourdes Miraculous
MARY BRACELET



*Hand-cast
in Lourdes,
France*

413 \$99.95

INFANT of PRAGUE
STATUE



414 6" \$45.95

SCAPULAR with *tiny Pearls*
BRACELET & NECKLACE



415 18" Necklace \$45.95

416 Double Pearl Bracelet \$24.95

HOLY ICON ORNAMENTS
Made in Ukraine



*Nativity of
Christ*

*Virgin &
Child*

*Virgin of
Vladimir*

417 Virgin & Child \$19.95

418 Nativity of Christ \$19.95

419 Virgin of Vladimir 6" \$19.95

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CRYSTAL GOLD PLATED JEWELRY



420 Crucifix 18" \$29.95

421 Heart Cross 18" \$36.95

422 Our Lady of Guadalupe 18" \$29.95

DIVINO NINO STATUE (Divine Child Jesus)



423 8" \$45.95

ICON CHRISTMAS ORNAMENT

Made in Ukraine



*Nativity
with
Angels*

424 5" \$16.95



Made in Italy

*Vermeil
Gold
over
Sterling*

MIRACULOUS MEDAL ROSARY BRACELET

425 24kt gold plated over sterling 7" \$59.95



OLIVE WOOD CROSS for comfort, with Relic that touched the tomb of Jesus

426 \$14.95

OUR LADY of MT. CARMEL SCAPULAR

*Mary
appeared
to St. Simon
in a vision, held
out a scapular
and said to him,
'he who dies in
this will not
suffer eternal
fire'*

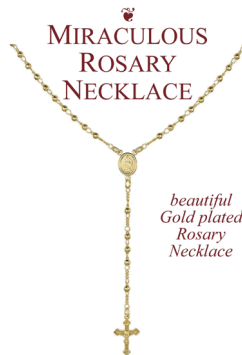


427 \$19.95

L'INNOCENCE Christmas Cards



428 Verse Inside: "May this Christmas season fill you with peace and touch you with God's Love." Each Box has 18 cards and envelopes. **\$22.95**



*beautiful
Gold plated
Rosary
Necklace*

429 \$44.95

MADONNA of the STREETS Christmas Cards



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Scapular Necklace & Bracelet

*Mary appeared to St. Simon in a vision,
held out a scapular and said to him,
'he who dies in this will not suffer
eternal fire'.*

430 14kt gold plated Necklace 26" \$29.95

431 14kt gold plated Bracelet fits up to 7 1/2" \$21.95

432 Verse Inside: "May the Peace and Joy of the newborn King be with you this Christmas!" Each Box has 18 cards and envelopes. **\$22.95**

GIFTS FROM MARY'S SHRINE



433 **Mary and The Saints Calendar** contains special feasts, marked with days of Fasting, special Saints Days and the Sundays of the Liturgical Year for both the Ordinary and Extraordinary Calendars. **\$16.95**

BABY JESUS in Embroidered Pouch



A treasure for Christmas

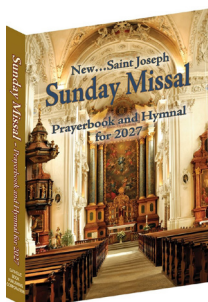
437 2 1/2" **\$9.95**

CELTIC CROSS Advent Candle Holder



440 Wreath 9" **\$36.95**

441 Set of 4 tapers in traditional colors, 3 purple & 1 pink. Boxed (not shown) **\$12.95**



444 **2027 St. Joseph Sunday Missal** is a complete annual Sunday Missal with each Sunday's Prayers, Readings, Responses for the calendar year and the Masses for Holy Days. **\$5.95**

GOLD over STERLING JEWELRY



434 Two Tone Miraculous 18" **\$104.95**

435 St. Benedict Crucifix 18" **\$149.95**

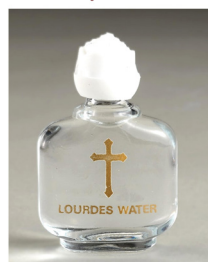
436 Miraculous 18" **\$119.95**

the NATIVITY Christmas Cards



438 Verse Inside: "Wishing you peace, joy and many blessings this Christmas and all through the New Year.." Each Box has 18 cards and envelopes. **\$22.95**

LOURDES WATER Glass Holy Water Bottle



439 1/2 oz **\$9.95**

The HOLY FAMILY Christmas Ornament Made in Ukraine



443 5" **\$16.95**

POINSETTIA BROOCH



442 2" **\$64.95**

ARCHANGEL MICHAEL Pewter & Gold STATUE



445 12" **\$159.95**

SONG of ANGELS Christmas Cards



446 Verse Inside: "In His birth we are blessed, in His name we rejoice at Christmas and all through the year." Each Box has 18 cards and envelopes. **\$22.95**

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GIFTS FROM MARY'S SHRINE

The KNEELING SANTA
Christmas Ornament



*That at the name of Jesus every knee
should bow - Philippians 2:10*

447 3.5" \$24.95

The
CHRISTMAS CROSS PIN



448 \$22.95

CATHOLIC Extra Virgin
OLIVE OIL CHRISTMAS
BLESSINGS SET

Parmesan Garlic Rosemary ~ Tuscan Herb



449 60ml 2pc set \$24.95



450 15oz \$14.95

LADYBUG BRACELET



451 \$36.95

CATCH UP with
JESUS SOCKS



452 \$14.95

CATCH UP with JESUS TSHIRT



453 SMLXL \$22.95

GIVE it to GOD
and go to sleep BEDSIDE CROSS



I pray for my LOVED ones
to always be safe.
I pray that PEACE finds me
asleep and awake.
I pray for my BLESSINGS
as FAITH sees me through.
And I pray that my WORRIES
are given to YOU.

454 \$16.95

KITCHEN PRAYER
PLAQUE



457 7" \$29.95

ST ANTHONY GOLF BALLS
just a little help with your game



set of 3

Patron Saint of Lost Items

455 \$16.95

Stemless Wine Glass



456 15oz \$14.95ea

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GIFTS FROM MARY'S SHRINE

NATIVITY STAINED GLASS Christmas Cards



458 Verse Inside: "Let peace and joy be your gift this Christmas and throughout the New Year. Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward all." (Luke 2:14) 15 cards and envelopes **\$16.95**

PRAYER OILS



459 Rose
460 Frankincense
461 Myrrh \$14.95ea

GUARDIAN ANGEL JEWELRY



your Guardian Angel is a messenger of love, comfort, hope and a reminder that she is always near

462 Stretch Bracelet \$29.95
463 Necklace 18" \$29.95

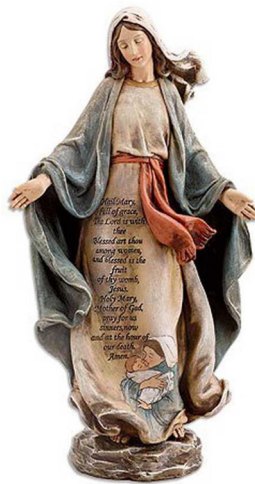
Worry Angel Figurine with Prayer

I know you are so worried about the ones you love. This tiny little Angel was sent from above.



464 \$19.95

HAIL MARY STATUE



465 12" \$99.95

SCAPULAR Bracelet & Necklace

Mary appeared to St. Simon in a vision, held out a scapular and said to him, 'he who dies in this will not suffer eternal fire'

466 Bracelet \$21.95 467 Necklace \$29.95



468 Miraculous Key Ring \$5.95

NATIVITY Christmas Cards



477 Verse Inside: "May the Miracle of Christmas fill your heart with peace and joy." Each Box has 18 cards and envelopes. **\$22.95**

Immaculate Waters Lotions & Soaps



Follow the words of Our Lady to St. Bernadette: **"Go to the spring, drink of it and wash yourself there."**

469 Lavender Bar Soap 4oz \$8.95
470 Lavender Hand and Body Lotion 8oz \$15.95
471 Lavender Liquid Soap 8oz \$15.95
472 Rose Bar Soap 4oz \$8.95
473 Rose Hand and Body Lotion 8oz \$15.95
474 Rose Liquid Soap 8oz \$15.95
475 Rose Spritzer 4oz \$12.95
476 Lavender Spritzer 4oz \$12.95

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Remembering Mary's Shrine

YOUR WILL IS YOUR LOVE LETTER

Writing your will is like writing a legal letter of love which gives you the freedom to pass on what is important to you to the people and places that matter most.

When the time is right for you to write your will, please consider including the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception. We rely entirely on the generosity of benefactors who love Mary's Shrine to provide for its financial needs.

Remembering the National Shrine in your will can help sustain our mission and ministry for future generations of Catholics from across the United States and around the world.

Every gift is meaningful and makes a difference.

To remember the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in your will, you may contact your attorney or financial planner for assistance in making a bequest.

You may also contact us at 202-526-8300 if we can provide you with additional information or assistance.

Thank you for your prayerful consideration and continued support of Mary's Shrine.

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♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦
**MARY'S
SHRINE**
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Shrine of the Immaculate Conception*

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Jacquelyn Hayes

DIRECTOR OF COMMUNICATIONS

Location

400 Michigan Avenue, NE
Washington, DC 20017
Tel: 202-526-8300
info@nationalshrine.org
www.nationalshrine.org

Shrine Hours

6 am - 6 pm

Sunday Masses

4:30 pm (Saturday Vigil)
7:30 am, 9 am, 10:30 am
*12 noon (Solemn Mass with Choir)
*2:30 pm (Spanish)
4:30 pm

Sunday Confessions

10 am - 12 noon
1:15 pm - 2:15 pm (Spanish)
2:30 pm - 4:30 pm

Monday-Friday Masses

7 am, 8 am, 12:10 pm, 5:15 pm

Saturday Masses

7 am, 8 am, 12:10 pm, 4:30 pm (Vigil)

Monday-Saturday Confessions

9 am - 12 noon
3 pm - 5 pm

Holy Days

*Please contact the Basilica for
Holy Day Schedules.*

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Monday - Saturday
9 am, 10 am, 11 am, 1 pm, 2 pm, 3 pm
No Guided Tours on Sunday.

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