MARY'S SHRINE

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Spring/Summer 2024



Our Lady of Washington

Mary's Shrine

By Reverend Monsignor Walter R. Rossi, J.C.L.



n this year's Sunday of the Word of God, which was observed on the Third Sunday of Ordinary Time, Pope Francis announced the inauguration of the "Year of Prayer" in preparation for the Year of Jubilee 2025 which will begin on Christmas Day 2024. This "Year of Prayer" is meant to help us as Catholic Christians celebrate the Holy Year with greater fervor, "experience the strength of God's hope," and rediscover "the great value and absolute need for prayer in our personal life, in the life of the Church, and in the world" (Angelus Address, January 21, 2024).

Anticipating the Year of Jubilee 2025, the National Holy Door at the National Shrine was sealed this past First Sunday of Advent. When Pope Francis opens the Holy Door of the Basilica of Saint Peter, and thus the Jubilee Year, the Holy Door of the National Shrine will also be opened. All are welcome to pass through this door and obtain the Jubilee Year Indulgence. As Jesus told his disciples, "I am the gate. Whoever enters through me will be saved" (John 10:9).

Here at Mary's Shrine, 2024 is also a year of jubilation: it is the 100th Anniversary of the First Mass celebrated inside what is now the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception. One hundred years ago, on April 20, 1924, Catholics throughout the United States gathered in the Crypt Church to celebrate Easter Sunday in the midst of a construction zone that was fittingly decorated to proclaim the Resurrection of the Lord.

This Easter Sunday, March 31, 2024, the National Shrine will observe this milestone anniversary at our Solemn Noon Mass celebrated by His Eminence, Wilton Cardinal Gregory, Archbishop of Washington and Chairman of the National Shrine Board of Trustees. The chalice to be used at this Easter Mass will be the same one used 100 years ago, the "first chalice" of the National Shrine.

Since that joyous day in 1924, more than 800,000 Masses have been celebrated at

the National Shrine, including Masses of Ordination for more than 7,000 men! In the past 100 years, there have been significant events that include papal coronation anniversaries, as well as Masses of Thanksgiving upon the election of a Pope, Papal Memorial Masses upon their death, Masses of Thanksgiving for the canonization of saints, and more.

Among our most notable events over the past 100 years have been visits by Saint Teresa of Calcutta, who often participated in Mass at Mary's Shrine for the profession of her sisters, the Missionaries of Charity; Saint Pope John Paul II who celebrated Morning Prayer with women religious in 1979; Pope Benedict XVI who celebrated Solemn Vespers with the Bishops of the United States in 2008; and Pope Francis who was not only the first pope to celebrate Mass at Mary's Shrine, but also the first to canonize a saint on American soil, Junípero Serra, in 2015.

Each year, thousands come to the National Shrine participating in diocesan and multicultural pilgrimages. Their presence, their prayer and devotions, and their song, are a vibrant celebration of the Universal Church.

In addition, school children, parish groups, university students, and seminarians celebrate both the Liturgy of the Eucharist and the Liturgy of Hours, along with Marian devotions within any of our eighty chapels. Other Masses in honor of Our Lady that began long before there were side chapels continue with the participation of both new and old pilgrims.

There is nothing more beautiful than to see the Great Upper Church or the Crypt Church filled with devoted pilgrims and visitors! Pilgrims bring the Shrine to life! The diverse expression of faith is inspiring. In a world where some have fallen away from the practice of their faith, I am pleased to tell you that at Mary's Shrine not only is that faith alive and well, but so are the faithful!

Pope Francis states that a Jubilee Year "is a season of grace." The celebration of one

hundred years of the liturgical, sacramental life of this National Shrine is a season of grace in abundance. Without question, one hundred years is more than a lifetime for most, and a lifetime that very few live to see. Some institutions rarely last decades, let alone a century.

Since that First Mass was celebrated in the Crypt Church, with a wooden altar and folding chairs, the structure of Mary's Shrine was brought to completion with the installation of the Trinity Dome in 2017. More importantly, in the past one hundred years, Mary's Shrine has grown in her service to pilgrims and visitors by providing daily and Sunday Masses, the Sacrament of Reconciliation seven days a week, and a place of prayerful refuge in a world filled with many distractions 365 days a year. In his visionary wisdom, Bishop Thomas J. Shahan, the founder of the National Shrine, once wrote: "What manner of men and women were they who dared to promise this noble temple and then to lift it." In Catholicism, every church represents Jesus Christ dwelling among us in the mystery of the altar. It is "the everabiding presence of a loving God."

Thanks to the goodness of our friends, benefactors, and donors, this great Marian sanctuary continues to be "the ever-abiding presence of a loving God" and the care of our loving Mother, Mary. I am so grateful for the support of our friends! It will only be through the grace of God and the generosity of devotees of Our Lady that the National Shrine will continue to be the center of Marian Devotion in the United States and stand as a spiritual powerhouse of grace for centuries to come. *****

» COMMEMORATION Our Lady of Ephesus

rom the cross, Jesus said to the disciple whom he loved, "Behold your mother." Scripture tells us, "And from that hour, he took her into his home" (John 19:27). According to tradition, the Blessed Virgin Mary spent the last years of her earthly life with John the Apostle in Ephesus (modern-day Turkey). It was in Ephesus in 431 A.D. that the Church Fathers declared Mary the Mother of God. In 1891, a stone house was discovered in Ephesus and identified as "Mary's



The Oratory of Our Lady of Ephesus

Home," a place of prayer and pilgrimage to this day.

At Mary's Shrine, the Oratory of Our Lady of Ephesus was dedicated in the Crypt Church in 2003. To commemorate the 20th anniversary of its dedication, Archbishop Martin Kmetec, O.F.M. Conv., of Ismir, Turkey, and Monsignor Walter Rossi, Rector of the Basilica, celebrated Mass in the Great Upper Church on September 10, 2023, then led the faithful in prayer before the Oratory of Our Lady of Ephesus. 👻

» ON THE COVER



Our Lady of Washington

Painted by American artist Frederic de Henwood under the commission of the National Shrine, *Our Lady of Washington* was an oil painting based on a statue of the same name. *Our Lady of Washington* was completed in 1924, the year in which the first Mass was celebrated on Easter Sunday. *Our Lady of Washington* resided in the Crypt Church and was the hallmark "Mary" of the National Shrine until the arrival of the papal mosaic *The Immaculate Conception* in 1930. ♥

Blessed Michael McGivney Statue Dedicated

A statue of Blessed Michael McGivney, the founder of the Knights of Columbus, was dedicated in the National Shrine's Hall of American Saints on December 8, 2023.

Monsignor Rossi, Rector of the Basilica, said, "We are especially pleased that this statue is dedicated on the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception, the patronal feast day of this Shrine and of our nation." He continued,



Blessed Michael McGivney Statue dedicated in the Hall of American Saints

"Blessed Michael McGivney had a particular devotion to the Blessed Mother and dedicated the Order to Our Lady." Monsignor Rossi, a Knight of Columbus himself, exclaimed, "Now our Blessed Founder is enshrined in Mary's House forever."

Cardinal Christophe Pierre, the Apostolic Nuncio to the United States, dedicated the statue following the Solemn Mass of the Immaculate Conception. Archbishop William Lori of Baltimore, the Supreme Chaplain of the Knights of Columbus, Patrick Kelly, the Supreme Knight of the Knights of Columbus, and Monsignor Rossi participated in the Rite of Dedication. Supreme Knight Kelly thanked Cardinal Wilton Gregory, the Chairman of the National Shrine Board of Trustees, and Monsignor Rossi "for their leadership and vision in placing a statue of Blessed Michael McGivney at the Basilica." On behalf of the Knights of Columbus, Supreme Knight Kelly prayed "that this beautiful statue will inspire Catholics around the world to grow in their faith, seek his intercession, and follow his mission."

For more information on Blessed Michael McGivney, the statue dedication, the Knight of Columbus and their longstanding support of the National Shrine from before its very beginnings, please visit www.nationalshrine.org/ blessedmcgivney. ♥

UPCOMING BASILICA BROADCASTS ON EWTN (all times Eastern) ALSO LIVESTREAMED AT NATIONALSHRINE.ORG/MASS

March 7	24 Hours for the Lord: Forty Hours Devotion Opening Mass	5:15pm
March 9	24 Hours for the Lord: Forty Hours Devotion Closing Mass	4:30pm
March 24	Palm Sunday	12 noon
March 28	Choral Meditations on Eucharistic Themes	5:30pm
March 28	Holy Thursday – Mass of the Lord's Supper	брт
March 29	Choral Meditation on the Passion of the Christ	2:30pm
March 29	Liturgy of the Lord's Passion	3pm
March 30	Solemn Easter Vigil	8pm
March 31	Easter Sunday	12 noon
May 12	Ascension of the Lord	12 noon
May 19	Pentecost	12 noon
June 2	The Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ	12 noon
August 15	Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary	12 noon

Historic Preservation Trust: Preserving Mary's Shrine in Perpetuity

uring the annual meeting of the Board of Trustees for the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in November 2023, the Board approved the creation of the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception Preservation Trust.

A District of Columbia nonprofit corporation, the Trust is charged with the mission, "to establish, receive, and maintain a fund or funds for the maintenance, repair, preservation, operation, and restoration" of Mary's Shrine.



Mary's Shrine: America's Catholic Church

Independently governed by its own Board of Directors, the Trust is responsible for the creation and growth of an investment portfolio, from which a portion of the income will be granted to the National Shrine for its maintenance and preservation in perpetuity. Gifts to the Trust are invested into the corpus of the Trust's endowment, allowing the Board of Directors to draw a percentage of the annual investment income while reinvesting the remainder. In so doing, the endowment will continually grow, as will the Trust's ability to support the National Shrine in perpetuity.

Reflecting on the significance of the Trust, His Eminence, Wilton Cardinal Gregory, Archbishop of Washington and Chairman of the National Shrine Board of Trustees, commented, "The Trust represents a new milestone in the history of the National Shrine. The vision and dream of creating a Marian Shrine over one hundred years ago in our Nation's Capital, having now been completed with the installation of the Trinity Dome in 2017, looks to endow the preservation of that sacred space until the end of time."

Monsignor Walter Rossi, Rector of the National Shrine, expressed his gratitude to the Board of Trustees for their willingness to create a perpetual and sustainable future for Mary's House, commenting, "I look forward to working with the Board of Directors for the Trust, and most especially, those who will support the Trust and its growth. I am grateful for all those who have already made gifts and to those who will contribute to the Trust in its ministry of preserving this preeminent Marian Shrine."

Gifts to the Trust can be mailed to Basilica of the National Shrine Preservation Trust, 400 Michigan Ave, NE, Washington, D.C. 20017. Kindly make gifts payable to "Basilica of the National Shrine Historic Trust." For further information, please contact Monsignor Walter Rossi. *****

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 100 Years of Worship

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

hen reflecting on the question "why do we build beautiful churches," the founder of the National Shrine wrote: "The House of God must be a thing of beauty, the highest outcome of human genius and industry ... But its mission is not accomplished if it be only an elegant and faultless edifice. The House of God ... represents Jesus Christ ... dwelling among us in the tremendous mystery of the altar. ... [It is] where the soul holds converse with its Creator and Redeemer" (Thomas J. Shahan, 1904).

For Bishop Thomas J. Shahan, the liturgical life of the National Shrine was of the utmost importance. As soon as it was physically possible, Mass was to be celebrated in the National Shrine. So, six months after the start of its construction, the liturgical life of the National Shrine began on Easter Sunday, 20 April 1924.

To say it was a beautiful event would be an overstatement. It was, after all, an active construction site, as the photograph below shows. Nevertheless, every effort was made for the celebration of the first Mass to be as beautiful as possible.

Dominating the worship space was the great "Construction Cross." Placed in the north apse in October of 1923, this cross kept pace with construction as it moved in a southerly direction. (See Rohling, 2023, "The Construction Cross 1923," Mary's Shrine, No. 2, fall/winter.) By Easter Sunday it stood center amid the wood beams and joists, approximately where the predella or platform and the freestanding main altar are now located. The surrounding support beams were draped in Marian colors of blue and white not only for decoration but also to protect congregants from splinters and scratches. Fastened to the timbers were pages from the Foundation Stone program that featured the color image Mary Immaculate, Patroness of the United States by Dom Raphael Pfisterer, OSB (1877-1942). Wood folding chairs filled the nave and the faithful knelt on the course, damp concrete floor—it was rainy and cold that day-a discomfort offered for the success of the National Shrine. The space was illuminated by simple milk glass fixtures along with bare light bulbs suspended from electrical cords temporarily strung across the Guastavino and Pewabic ceiling. The faithful came dressed in their Easter finery: the ladies with their gloves, hats, and handbags; the gentlemen in their suits and ties; and the religious in their Sunday habits. Diplomats and distinguished guests sported morning coats and formal attire appropriate to the time and the occasion. The excitement and exhilaration shared among the faithful supplied a sparkle and arrayment that no external decoration could equal. On



1924 Easter Sunday, First Mass

this Easter morning the church was, in fact, "beautiful!"

The space designated as the sanctuary was flanked by American and papal flags along with potted palms, lilies, and assorted flowers. An oil painting, *Our Lady of Washington* by Frederic de Henwood (1864-1948), was displayed for the first time. This painting was commissioned by the National Shrine and served as its patronal image until 1930 and the arrival of the papal gift of the Vatican mosaic of the oil painting of *Immaculate Conception* by Bartolomé Estaban Murillo.



19 April 1924, Altar Preparation

Situated in the center niche of the north apse, which is now the Chapel of the Good Shepherd and the Blessed Sacrament, was a small altar, handmade of wood in 1774 by then Father John Carroll, S.J. This was the main altar of the National Shrine until 1928. Ornamenting this plain, rectangular box was a wood tabernacle and baldachino hand carved in Philadelphia in 1852. Three bronze candlesticks stood on each side. A portable altar stone was placed in the center of the *mensa* or table below the tabernacle. Both the stone and altar were draped with linens of handmade Spanish lace. In front of the altar was a provisional communion rail covered with white cloths, as seen in the photograph. Reverend Bernard A. McKenna, secretary of Bishop Shahan and director of the National Shrine, sang the high Mass using the Missale Romanum that once belonged to Archbishop Michael A. Corrigan of New York (1885-1902). He also used the "first chalice and paten" of the National Shrine crafted by Jenkins and Jenkins of Baltimore (1917), one of the founding families of Maryland. The precious metals and jewels used to make this chalice were donated by people living in the United States and foreign countries. The names of the donors are written on a scroll that is sealed

inside the stem of the chalice. They are remembered each time the chalice is used. (See Rohling, 2017, "The First Jewel," *Mary's Shrine,* No. 2, spring/ summer.) Bishop Shahan preached the sermon and a 108-voice choir



from the Sulpician First Chalice

Seminary (Theological College) provided the music. The fact that Bishop Shahan granted McKenna the honor and privilege of celebrating the first Mass in the National Shrine was a sign of his respect and appreciation for the herculean efforts of McKenna that brought them to this day.

The first Mass on Easter Sunday in 1924 was neither the dedication of the Crypt Church nor of the National Shrine. That would not happen until 1959 when construction was completed. This did not, however, pose any canonical impediments for liturgical celebrations or the sacraments within the Crypt Church. (See Rohling, 2022, "Our Lady of the Catacombs," *Mary's Shrine*, No. 2, spring/summer.)

The sanctification of a church or a place of worship requires more than a rite or a ritual. The sanctification of a church requires the presence of the people of God, acting in the grace of God. For one hundred years, the people of God have been living and active in this National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception. During this time more than 800,000 Masses have been celebrated in the National Shrine.

Beginning on Easter Sunday (31 March 2024) to Easter Sunday (20 April 2025), the National Shrine will celebrate one hundred years of worship.

Easter Sunday

Wilton Cardinal Gregory, Archbishop of Washington and chairman of the National Shrine Board of Trustees, will celebrate the solemnity of the Resurrection of Our Lord and begin the centennial celebration using the same chalice used one hundred years ago. Other special liturgical items and gifts will also be used at this Mass and during this year. These include the crosier of Bishop Thomas J. Shahan and the Marian Year cruets (1954-55) of Pope Pius XII.



Marian Year Cruets of Pope Pius XII

Although the whereabouts of the original oil painting of *Our Lady of Washington* is unknown, a "holy card" featuring a photograph of this painting will be given to all who attend any of the Masses at the National Shrine on Easter Sunday. After which, it will be available in the gift and book shops of the National Shrine.



NSIC Archives

Our Lady of Washington (de Henwood)

Exposition of the Relics of the Passion

The National Shrine is an extraordinary church that offers extraordinary opportunities for devotion and prayer. Exposition of the Relics of the Passion of Our Lord Jesus Christ is such an opportunity and will be offered this year in anticipation of the centenary.

The earliest extant written account of a Christian pilgrimage to Jerusalem tells of Holy Week rituals that included the veneration of the relics of Our Lord and the recitation of prayers at each station of the cross. This coming Good Friday, the venerable and ancient Holy Week observance of the *Exposition of the Passion Relics* will be observed from 7:00 - 11:45 a.m. and 1:00 - 6:00 p.m. in the Crypt Church. The Stations of the Cross will be held at 12 noon.

The reliquary contains first-class relics from the passion and death of Jesus, the Blessed Mother, Mary of Magdala, Mary the wife of Clopas and sister of the Blessed Mother, and the twelve apostles.

Heritage Talks

In his discourse on the purpose of beautiful churches, Bishop Shahan also spoke of the church as a "great school of the Word of God," a "great open space" which could accommodate everyone and where everyone was welcome. Bearing this in mind, on the 20th of each month beginning in April, presentations on Eucharist and the Church will follow the 5:15 p.m. Mass on weekdays or the 12:10 p.m. on Saturdays, depending on the calendar. These talks will be recorded live and made available on the National Shrine YouTube channel. Topics will include Eucharist and Mary: "Do Whatever He Tells You;" Eucharist: Feeding the World; Eucharist and Viaticum: Food for the Journey; Eucharist and the holy women and men of the National Shrine.

Advent Rorate Mass

The heritage talk for the month of December will be replaced by the *Missa rorate*. This Advent tradition, dating from the eighth century, will be observed on Friday, December 20, at 7:00 a.m. in the Crypt Church.

The Latin name "rorate" is taken from the incipit of the Introit of the Fourth Sunday of Advent and the Advent votive Masses of the Blessed Mother: roráte, coeli, désuper (drop down, ye heavens). It is also known as the "Mass of the Angel" because of the opening phrase of the gospel reading, "At that time the angel Gabriel was sent by God" (Luke 1: 26). What made this Mass different was the time of day at which it was celebrated: before Lauds or dawn. In monasteries and convents, Lauds was the hour of the Divine Office (Liturgy of the Hours) which began the day. The first Mass of the day was customarily celebrated afterwards. In the winter darkness, the faithful would walk to their churches carrying their lanterns or candles to light their way. Upon their arrival, they would place these candles and lanterns around the altar or hold them

throughout the Mass (at that time, the nave was generally without pews). As Mass was celebrated the sun rose, illuminating the interior of the church. This symbolism of "Mary, the Dawn" and "Christ the Perfect Day" was not lost on the faithful of the time, who had an organic, cosmic understanding of light and dark and its place in the liturgical cycle. This Advent practice has been and still is popular in the Germanic countries. It was never disallowed.

On Friday, December 20, the *Missa rorate* in honor of the Blessed Mother, will be celebrated at 7:00 a.m. in the Crypt Church. Everyone is invited to bring a lantern or a candle to "light their way" and to illuminate the Crypt Church during the celebration of the Eucharist. A video presentation on the history of this practice will be available on the National Shrine website.

100 Years of Ordination: Exhibit and Festive Mass

One of the accomplishments of Bishop Shahan outside of the National Shrine, was the number of scholasticates (religious houses of study for priesthood) established in the northeast quadrant of Washington, D.C. At its highest point, there were almost one hundred houses. Perhaps one of the reasons this section of D.C. came to be known as "little Rome." As part of its liturgical life, the National Shrine was the locus for the conferral of the Sacrament of Holy Orders, including first tonsure, the four minor orders (porter, lector, exorcist, acolyte) and the major orders (sub-deacon, deacon, priest). The first conferral of major and minor orders in the Crypt Church was 12-14 June 1924; Bishop Shahan was the ordaining prelate. To date, well over 7,000 men have received at least one of the major and minor orders at the National Shrine. Many of them have received all ranks, from first tonsure to priesthood.

In 1933, the Rite of Episcopal Ordination was conferred for the first time in the Crypt Church: Reverend Gerald Shaughnessy, S.M., fourth Bishop of Seattle. To date, thirty bishops have been ordained at the National Shrine.

As part of the centenary of the liturgical life of the National Shrine, there will be an exhibit in Memorial Hall dedicated to the Sacrament of Holy Orders. In addition, a Mass of Thanksgiving will be celebrated by and for those bishops, priests, and deacons who received the Sacrament of Holy Orders at the National Shrine. Further information on this event will be provided on the website of the National Shrine.

In his closing remarks on "why we build beautiful churches," Bishop Shahan wrote: "It is, indeed, the vestibule of heaven. Many will enter it in years to come ... countless souls will learn to [proclaim] with the royal psalmist, 'How lovely your dwelling, O LORD of Hosts! Blessed are those who dwell in your house! They never cease to praise you' (Psalm 84: 2, 5)."

During this year of celebration please join us either in person or online as we begin our next one hundred years of worship. Very set the set of the set o



1925 Sep 24 Ordinations



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LEAVING A LEGACY Remembering the National Shrine in Your Will

For many, charitable giving is an act of faith grounded in confidence in God's abundance and motivated by a desire to create additional resources for accomplishing God's work.

Leaving a legacy gift to the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception offers the opportunity to pass on not only your assets but also the values that have guided your life.

Remembering the National Shrine in your estate planning is a wonderful way to put your values into action, ensuring that Mary's House is maintained for future generations as a center of worship and devotion as a personal legacy.

To remember the Basilica of the National Shrine in your will, you may contact your attorney or financial advisor for assistance in making a bequest. Or, you may simply include the following in your will:

I give, devise, and bequeath to the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception, a body corporate of the District of Columbia, and located in Washington, D.C., (the sum of ____) or (____% of rest residue, and remainder of my estate) or (____shares of _____) or all my right, title and interest in the following described property _____).

Please feel free to contact the Basilica at 202-526-8300 if we can provide you with further information or assistance.

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

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Please visit nationalshrine.org for the latest news and information.



MARY'S SHRINE

A publication of the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception

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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.

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

Gift Shop & Bookstore Open Daily 9 am - 5 pm (Closed Thanksgiving Day) Shop Online Anytime at www.nationalshrineshops.com