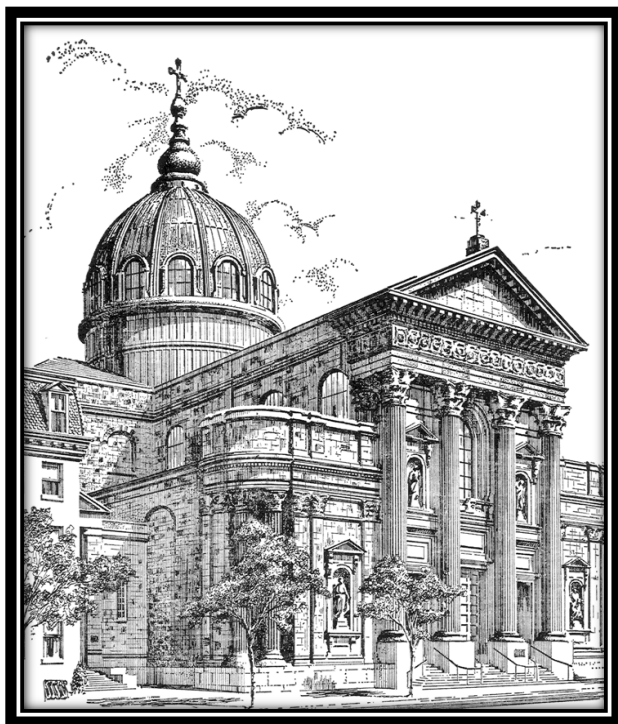


**Cathedral Basilica of Saints Peter and Paul
and the Shrine of Saint Katharine Drexel
Archdiocese of Philadelphia**



18th Street and Benjamin Franklin Parkway
Philadelphia, PA 19103
www.cathedralphila.org

Reverend Gerald Dennis Gill, Rector and
Pastor

Mass and reconciliation schedule –
<http://cathedralphila.org/mass-schedules>
Additional information and history –
<http://cathedralphila.org/about/about-the-cathedral>

Welcome to the Cathedral Basilica of Saints Peter and Paul – the Mother Church of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia. The Cathedral Basilica is primarily a house of prayer for all the clergy and faithful of our Archdiocese and for the many pilgrims and visitors who have journeyed here. We encourage you to follow the numbers in this brochure to learn about the architecture, artifacts, and artwork of this beautiful house of worship.



The Cathedral Basilica of Saints Peter and Paul, was designed by architect Napoleon LeBrun (1821-1901) and modeled after the Lombard Church of Saint Charles (San Carlo al Corso) in Rome. It is in the Neo-Classical style of the Italian Renaissance. The cornerstone was laid in 1846 by Bishop Francis Patrick Kenrick. The structure was completed in 1864 and dedicated by Bishop James Frederick Wood.

1
The Sanctuary, Great Dome and Crypt – The principal work of the 1956-1957 renovation was the construction of the semi-circular apse to extend the sanctuary. The focal point is the permanent altar, which faces east. It is constructed of Botticino marble with Mandorlato rose marble trim. Three bronze discs decorate the front, the central one of which bears the Greek inscription of Jesus Christ, IHS. The baldachin (canopy) over the altar is of antique Italian marble. The underside of the dome is a marble mosaic. Its central figure is the dove, symbol of the Holy Spirit. The mosaic carries the Latin inscription “In omni loco sacrificatur et offertur nomini meo oblatio mundo.” (“In every place there is offered and sacrificed in My Name a clean oblation.” (Malachi 1:11)) The capitals are cast bronze and angels of white Italian marble stand 10 feet high at the corners of the baldachin. The decorative rosettes are of Botticino marble. Six giant Verte Imperial marble columns are set into the curved wall of the apse. Interspersed between these pillars at the rear of the sanctuary, are stained-glass windows by Connick of Boston. The center window, devoted to the Eucharist, depicts the sacrifice of Melchizedek, the multiplication of the loaves and fishes, and the Last Supper. The window to the left portrays three events in the life of Saint Peter: his call by Christ to be a fisher of men, Christ giving Peter the keys to heaven as Prince of the Apostles (one key represents temporal power and the other represents spiritual power), and his crucifixion upside-down since he considered himself not worthy to be crucified as Jesus Christ was crucified. The window to the right reveals three scenes from the life of Saint Paul: his conversion on the road to Damascus, his preaching to the Athenians about the unknown God, and his death in Rome by beheading. Between the stained-glass windows are two mosaics in Italian marble. One shows Saint Peter with Saint Peter’s Basilica in Rome as the background, and the other represents Saint Paul with Saint Paul’s Basilica Outside-the-Walls of Rome in the background. The inscription behind the main altar in the sanctuary reads “Tu es Petrus et super hanc petram aedificabo Ecclesiam meam” (“Thou are Peter and upon this rock I will build my

Church” (Matthew 16:18)). In 2007, the tabernacle was moved to the main altar. Saint Jude Liturgical Arts Studio designed, fabricated, and built the Blessed Sacrament tabernacle which is located under the existing baldachin. The materials that make up the tabernacle match materials used elsewhere in the Cathedral. The tabernacle door and the columns to the left and right of the door imitate the Cathedral’s interior architecture. Inside the tabernacle door is a silver medallion of the resurrected Christ. The sanctuary lamp (on the left) which burns continuously is a reminder that this tabernacle is the place that reserves the Blessed Sacrament in the Cathedral. The crucifix and candlesticks are bronze.

The great dome rises 156 feet 8 inches above the floor of the Cathedral. The interior reveals a striking 1862 painting, The Assumption of the Blessed Virgin by Constantino Brumidi. At the next level are panel paintings entitled Angels of the Passion. With each group of angels is an emblem of the passion. In clockwise order (facing the main altar) they are the chalice (Blood of Christ), the cross, the crown of thorns, Veronica’s veil, angels weeping, stripping of garments and scepter, the host (Body of Christ), angels weeping, the nails, the banner reading INRI, the sponge on a reed, and the scourging pillar. On the third level, the stained-glass windows show Mary holding the Child Jesus, with Saint Peter on her right and Saint Paul on her left. The remaining windows are all Doctors of the Church. In clockwise order (facing the main altar) the windows depict Saint Paul, Saint Augustine, Saint Jerome, Saint Ambrose, Saint Gregory, Saint Leo, Saint Basil, Saint John Chrysostom, Saint Cyril, and Saint Athanasius. The medallions on the spandrels at the base of the dome represent the four evangelists, Saints Matthew (angel), Mark (lion), Luke (winged ox), and John (eagle).

The burial crypt (not open to the public) under the main altar of the Cathedral is the final resting place of the remains of most of the ordinaries of the Archdiocese as well as other bishops and clergymen of Philadelphia. The crypt can be reached through both the sanctuary and by way of an ambulatory that extends from the rectory to the sacristy on the exterior apse wall. The walls and the ceiling of the crypt are of white Carrara marble. Within the crypt is a simple altar of Carrara marble where mass is celebrated for the deceased. A common practice in important cathedrals and churches is the interment of those either important to the faith in general or those integral to that location. The Cathedral Basilica is no different. The remains of Bishop

Conwell and Bishop Egan, the first two bishops of Philadelphia, were the first to be transferred to the crypt in 1869. In vaults of the crypt also lie the remains of Cardinal Joseph Dougherty (1st Cardinal Archbishop of Philadelphia) and Cardinal Anthony Bevilacqua.

②

Northside Altar – Design of the original architect, Napoleon LeBrun, the altar was placed in 1887 and dedicated to the Blessed Virgin Mary. Above the altar is the famous Venetian glass mosaics of The Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary. The altar was executed in 1915 in Venice, Italy but due to World War I, shipment to the United States was delayed and they were installed in the Cathedral in 1918.

③ and opposite side

Northside and Southside Transepts – Over the transepts are paintings which remain from the earlier renovation (1915) of the Cathedral: Filippo Costaggini’s The Ascension of Our Lord (northside transept) and Arthur Thomas’ The Adoration of the Magi (southside transept). The latter was re-painted by Moricz L. Tallos in 1980. Each is approximately 16 by 25 feet. The north transept includes a stained-glass window of the resurrection of our Lord; the window in the south transept shows the visit of the shepherds to the infant Jesus in the nativity. The doors on either side of the north transept mural lead into The Chapel of Our Lady of the Blessed Sacrament.

④

Chapel of the Blessed Sacrament – The Chapel was planned as a memorial of the Marian Year and was dedicated on the Feast of the Maternity of Our Lady in 1955. The completion of The Chapel made it possible to close the Cathedral for renovations in 1956-1957. John McShain, Inc., of Philadelphia was the builder and Eggers and Higgins, Inc., of New York City were the architects. The Chapel is Roman Classic architecture; the façade is dressed brownstone. The interior is noted for its simplicity. The altar is of Verde Antique marble. The reredos was replaced with marble in 2009 by Cardinal Justin Rigali. The tester or canopy is of matched grain walnut with hand-carved filigree, finished with gilt. The stained-glass window over the side entrance is Mary Queen of the Universe. The remaining side windows picture the Seven Joys of Our Lady: The Annunciation, The Visitation, The Nativity, The Adoration of the Magi, Jesus in the Temple, The Resurrection, and The Assumption. The circular window over the main entrance shows the Blessed Mother looking down on the Blessed Sacrament in a monsternace.

⑤ and opposite side

Statues of Saint Peter and Saint Paul – These were placed in the Cathedral Basilica in August 2009. They were moved from the Church of the Most Blessed Sacrament, now closed, in Philadelphia. Saint Peter is depicted holding the keys to the kingdom, representing the heavenly and temporal authority bestowed upon Peter by Christ. The book carried by Saint Paul represents his epistles in the New Testament of the Bible. The sword is a reminder of the means of his martyrdom – he was beheaded in Rome in 67 AD.

⑥

Altar dedicated to Saint Joseph – This altar was blessed by Cardinal Rigali on 6 June 2009. It has a sculpted seven-foot marble statue of the honored saint over its altar and a marble reredos which serves as backdrop. Although new to the Cathedral Basilica, the altar formerly graced North Philadelphia’s Saint Boniface Church from 1866 through 2006 and dates from the late 19th century. The altar is enclosed by sections of the original marble altar rail from Saint Boniface Church.

⑦

Altar dedicated to Our Lady of Guadalupe – The altar of Our Lady of Guadalupe was the thought of Cardinal Rigali. He promised Our Lady and the Hispanic community to have the image of Our Lady, who is the Patron of the Americas and Our Lady of the Unborn, installed in the Cathedral Basilica. His Eminence approached the craftsmen at the Studios of Saint Jude Liturgical Arts to design and build the altar in Her honor. After much thought and consideration, it was believed that the altar which previously had the Holy Family Triptych would be a perfect setting for the new altar. It was installed in the Cathedral Basilica in December 2009.

⑧

Altar dedicated to Patrick John Ryan (1831-1911), the 6th bishop of the Cathedral Basilica – Designed in the ancient Celtic-Romanesque style of architecture, it is remarkable for its nine-foot sculptured Celtic cross. One interpretation of the Celtic Cross claims that placing the cross on top of the circle represents Christ’s supremacy over the pagan symbol of the sun. To the left of the cross is a statue of Saint Patrick and to the right a statue of Saint John the Evangelist, Archbishop Ryan’s patron saints. Saint Patrick is seen on the left with a shamrock in his hand, the symbol he used to teach the Irish about the Blessed Trinity.

⑨

Shrine to Saint Katharine Drexel – This altar was dedicated in 2009 and was especially challenging to complete because the marble statue had to be based on the true likeness of

Saint Katharine. It was especially important that the original altar be retained because it was donated in the 19th century by Saint Katharine herself, along with her sisters, Elizabeth and Louise, as a memorial to their deceased parents, Francis and Emma Drexel. The Tomb of Saint Katharine is directly to the left. Her sacred remains were translated to the Cathedral Basilica on 2 August 2018. The new tomb was solemnly installed on 18 November 2018. (See History of Saint Katharine Drexel on the last page.)

10

Northside mosaic – In the summer of 1975, to celebrate the 100th anniversary of Philadelphia as an archdiocese, two mosaic murals designed by Leandro Velasco (1933-) of Rambusch studios and executed in Venice, were set in place. The northside mosaic depicts people and events in the Church's involvement with Pennsylvania history. At the top are the coats of arms of Pope Paul VI and John Cardinal Krol, and at the bottom is the symbol of the 41st Eucharistic Congress celebrated in Philadelphia in 1976. The historic scenes are of George Washington and members of the Continental Congress at Old Saint Mary's Church; at the time Mother Katharine Drexel, but now Saint Katharine Drexel, foundress of the Blessed Sacrament Sisters; Sisters of Saint Joseph caring for the wounded on the Gettysburg battlefield; and Commodore Barry, founder of the United States Navy. The representation of Saint Charles Seminary, founded by Bishop Kenrick in 1832, includes a silhouette of the artist, Thomas Eakins, on a bicycle. The other buildings are Saint Michael's and Saint Augustine's churches, burned and rebuilt during the "Know-Nothing" riots and Saint Martin's Chapel at Saint Charles Seminary.

11

Cathedral Organ – The Cathedral organ is one of the largest in the city of Philadelphia, having seventy-five ranks of pipes, ninety stops and 4,648 pipes on four manuals and pedals. The Cathedral's first organ was built by John C.B. Standbridge in 1869 at a cost of \$10,000. It was replaced by a new instrument in 1920 at a cost of \$30,000. The new instrument, Opus 939, was built by the Austin Organ Company of Hartford, Connecticut. In the 1957 renovations a new console was installed and the organ was rebuilt by the Tellers Organ Company. During these renovations, the organ loft was expanded to provide more room for the choir. The choir was established in the 1920's. During 1975-76, major renovations were completed on the organ in preparation for the 41st International Eucharistic Congress and the United States Bicentennial. In 1977 the Tellers console was replaced with a used Austin Console, originally built in 1922 for the Rochester Theatre. Further restoration

undertaken in 1987 included the addition of the Trumpet en-chamade, situated on the ceiling of the organ case. A chancel organ of 11 ranks, built in the 1950s by the M.P. Moller Company, was also installed. An echo organ is situated in the sanctuary. The organ is considered perfectly placed, speaking directly into the nave. The inscription in Latin in the vaulted ceiling above the organ reads "Vas electionis est mihi iste, ut portet nomen meum coram gentibus." ("He [Saint Paul] is a chosen instrument of mine to carry my name before the Gentiles." (Acts 9:15))

12

Southside mosaic – This mural is dedicated to the life and works of Saint John Neumann, fourth Bishop of Philadelphia, who is the central figure in his episcopal garments. The phrase by which he shaped his life "Soli Deo" ("For God alone"), is repeated in German and Italian. The Cathedral at the top recalls the Bishop's joy at the completion of its exterior in 1859. In further scenes Bishop Neumann is present at the promulgation of the dogma of the Immaculate Conception in 1854 at Pope Pius IX's invitation. Also shown are the symbols of the eighty churches built during his years in Philadelphia (Saint Peter's Church, where the Bishop is buried, is recognizable) and he is surrounded by members of the numerous religious communities which he introduced to the diocese. In a scene suggestive of his zeal in traveling in the most remote areas to confer Confirmation, the Bishop receives young people and their sponsors. The monstrance recalls Bishop Neumann introducing into the diocese the tradition of the Forty Hours Devotion in 1853, an annual three-day period of Eucharistic adoration, and the rule he wrote for the confraternity of the Blessed Sacrament.

13

Altar dedicated to Saint John Neumann – Dedicated in 2009, new to the altar is the imposing seven-foot marble statue sculpted at Saint Jude Liturgical Arts Studio in Italy. Saint John Neumann (1811-1860) was born in what is now the Czech Republic, studied in Prague, came to New York at the age of 25 and was ordained a priest. He did missionary work in New York and at 29 joined the Redemptorists and became its first member to profess vows in the United States. In 1852 Saint John Neumann became the fourth Bishop of Philadelphia. While Bishop of Philadelphia, he founded the first Catholic diocesan school system in the United States and drew into the city many teaching communities of sisters and the Christian Brothers. On 13 October 1963, John Neumann became the first American bishop to be beatified. Canonized in 1977, he is buried in Saint Peter the Apostle Church at 5th and Girard Streets in

Philadelphia, at his request. He is the first male American citizen to be canonized.

14

Altar including a semi-circular apse for the Baptistry – In 1956, the apse was added with an exquisite stained-glass window, from Connick of Boston, depicting the baptism of Jesus by Saint John the Baptist and Saints Peter and Paul baptizing prisoners in the Mamertine prison in Rome with water from a miraculous spring. The Mandorlato Rose baptismal font is surmounted by a bronze dome with the inscription of the Sign of the Cross, "In nomine Patris et Filii et Spiritus Sancti, Amen" (In the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit, Amen). The baptistry is enclosed by a bronze screen inspired by a similar one in the Cathedral of Toledo in Spain. Set into the top center of the screen is the coat of arms of Cardinal O'Hara, carrying his motto in Latin "Ipsam Sequens Non Devias" ("If you follow her you shall not go astray", referring to our Lady).

15

Altar dedicated to the Purgatorial or Holy Souls – The altar is a copy of the grand altar of The Chapel of the Most Blessed Sacrament in Saint Peter's Basilica in Rome, which is considered one of the most beautiful altars in the Eternal City. It was designed by Gian Lorenzo Bernini (1598-1680). The focal center of the altar is the Ciborium. Two angels kneel at the sides, a motif dear to Bernini from the beginning of his career. These two figures are magnificent and at the same time light because of the wide looseness of their robes, the affected grace of their attitudes and the expressive ecstasy of their faces. The columns that support the dome are of the finest Paonazzo marble, streaked with dark veins. The top table of the altar, where the angel figures and tabernacle rest, is engraved with "Requiem Aeternam Dona Eis Domine" ("Eternal Rest Grant Unto Them O Lord"). The next layer of the altar, slightly recessed and all white, is a domed edifice with three pillars on each side. Three smaller angels are among the pillars. The ones on each side have hands crossed over chest and the one in the middle is with hands together in prayer. The dome is topped with the Holy Spirit (a dove figure) in the middle. Sitting at the very top is a brass cross. The altar was erected in 1906 and is a gift of Mr. William J. Power, who for more than half a century was associated with the business offices of the diocese.

16

Altar dedicated to the Blessed Virgin Mary under the title of Our Lady of Grace or Our Lady of the Miraculous Medal – An altar to the Eucharist was removed in 2008 to install the new, more classical altar to the Blessed Virgin Mary

under the title of Our Lady of Grace/Our Lady of the Miraculous Medal. The altar to Our Lady of Grace is new to the Cathedral but was formerly located in North Philadelphia's Saint Boniface Church and dates from 1868. The statue of the Blessed Mother is a rendition of the image on the Miraculous Medal. The medallion above the statue of the Blessed Mother as Our Lady of the Miraculous Medal originated with Mary herself. The medal is based on two apparitions of the Blessed Virgin to Saint Catherine Labouré in 1830.

On the front of the medal, the Blessed Virgin stands on a half-globe, her foot crushing the head of the serpent. Her arms are outstretched, with rays issuing from her extended hands, the symbol of the graces which she obtains for those who ask for them. Surrounding this image is the invocation, "O Mary conceived without sin, pray for us who have recourse to thee!" The reverse side of the medal (the medallion above the statue) bears a cross with a bar at its foot that is intertwined with the letter "M". Beneath the letter are the hearts of Jesus and Mary, both surmounted by flames of love, one having a crown of thorns and the other pierced with a sword. Encircling all of this are 12 stars around the oval frame.

The icon of Our Lady of Perpetual Help is a copy of a 15th-century original painted in Byzantine style. It was enthroned in the Cathedral Basilica by Cardinal Rigali in 2009. The original has been in the custody of the Redemptorist Fathers (Saint John Neumann was a Redemptorist) in Rome's Saint Alphonsus Church since the 19th century. The reproduction, which was donated by the Redemptorists, is a copy originally obtained from the Vatican and had a place at Saint Boniface Church. Our Lady of Perpetual Help is the patroness of the Redemptorists. In addition to using the altar from Saint Boniface Church, the altar to the Blessed Virgin is enclosed by sections of the original marble altar rail from Saint Boniface Church.

17

Southside Altar – Design of the original architect, Napoleon LeBrun, the altar was placed in 1887 and dedicated to the Sacred Heart of Jesus. Above the altar is the famous Venetian glass mosaics of The Apparition of Our Lord to Saint Margaret Mary Alacoque. The altar was executed in 1915 in Venice, Italy but due to World War I, shipment to the United States was delayed and they were installed in the Cathedral in 1918.

History of Saint Katherine Drexel – Katharine Drexel was born in Philadelphia on 26 November 1858, the second child of Hannah and Francis Anthony Drexel. Hannah died five weeks after her baby's birth. For two years Katharine and her sister Elizabeth were cared for by their aunt and uncle, Ellen and Anthony Drexel. When Francis married Emma Bouvier in 1860, he brought his two daughters home. A third daughter Louise was born in 1863. The children grew up in a loving family atmosphere permeated by deep faith. The girls were educated at home by tutors. They had the added advantage of touring parts of the United States and Europe with their parents.

By word and example Emma and Francis taught their daughters that wealth was meant to be shared with those in need. Three afternoons a week Emma opened the doors of their home to serve the needs of the poor. When the girls were old enough, they assisted their mother. When Francis purchased a summer home in Torresdale, Pennsylvania, Katharine and Elizabeth taught Sunday school classes for the children of employees and neighbors. The local pastor, Reverend James O'Connor (1823-1890; later became bishop of Omaha) became a family friend and Katharine's spiritual director.

When Katharine was twenty-one, her mother was diagnosed with cancer. Katharine nursed her through three years of intense suffering. During this time, she frequently thought that Christ might be calling her to the religious life. After Emma's death, Katharine wrote to Bishop O'Connor about it. He advised her to "think, pray and wait."

Francis Drexel died suddenly in 1885. According to his will, during their lifetimes the three sisters inherited the income from his estate, but not the principal. The principal would go to their children, but if no children survived them, the money was to be distributed to the charities he listed. Monsignor Joseph Stephan, director of the Catholic Bureau of Indian Missions, introduced Katharine and her sisters to the plight of the Native Americans. Travelling with him and with Bishop O'Connor, the young women visited several remote reservations in 1887 and 1888. They met with tribal leaders and witnessed the dire poverty endured by the people. Katharine began building schools on the reservations, providing food, clothing and financial support. Also aware of the suffering of the black people, she extended her love to them. During her lifetime, through the Bureau of Colored and Indian Missions, she supported

churches and schools throughout the United States and abroad.

In 1889 Bishop O'Connor agreed Katharine was called to be a religious, but despite her preference for a cloistered life he urged her to found a congregation to work with the Black and Indian peoples. She hesitated, but after taking it to prayer she accepted this as her vocation. She pronounced her vows as the first Sister of the Blessed Sacrament on 12 February 1891. She and thirteen companions moved into Saint Elizabeth Convent in Bensalem in 1892. On the property, they erected a boarding school for black children that was connected to the chapel by a covered walk. By 1894, young SBS were in Saint Catherine Indian School in Santa Fe; in Saint Francis de Sales School in Virginia in 1899; and in 1902 in Saint Michael Indian School on the Navajo Reservation. Gradually, other boarding schools sprang up on reservations. In day schools, the Sisters taught elementary and high school levels in urban and rural areas of the Northeast, the Midwest and the South. In 1917 a school to prepare teachers was established in New Orleans. By 1925 it received a charter as Xavier University of Louisiana.

A severe heart attack in 1935 curtailed Saint Katharine's missionary travels. Although for about 20 years she lived in prayerful retirement, her love and interest in the missions continued until her death on 3 March 1955. Saint Katharine was the last of the three Drexel sisters to die. The estate of Francis A. Drexel was then distributed to the charities listed in his will. Following the miraculous healing of Robert Gutherman's eardrum, Saint Katharine was beatified in 1988. The healing of little Amy Wall's deafness opened the way for her canonization by Pope John Paul II on 1 October 2000.

Today, the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament continue to serve in elementary and secondary schools, as well as at Xavier University of Louisiana in New Orleans, the first Black Catholic university in the United States. They are also involved in a variety of other services including pastoral and spiritual ministries, social services, counseling, religious education, and health care, primarily but not exclusively among Black and Native Americans.