

## THE TRINITY DOME AT AMERICA'S CATHOLIC CHURCH

The Bishops of the United States have approved a special one-time second collection to take place in parishes across the nation on Mother's Day 2017 to support the mosaic ornamentation of the Trinity Dome, the crowning jewel of the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception. The National Shrine has been a century in the making since the laying of its foundation stone in 1920. Thank you in advance for your promotion and support of this initiative to help complete America's Catholic Church in advance of its 100th anniversary.

[www.trinitydome.org](http://www.trinitydome.org) | [www.nationalshrine.org](http://www.nationalshrine.org)



Top: Artistic rendition of the mosaic that will adorn the Trinity Dome.  
 Bottom: Pope Francis blesses the first segment of the Trinity Dome mosaic  
 on his visit to the National Shrine in 2015.



## AMERICA'S CATHOLIC CHURCH

# The Trinity Dome National Second Collection

### THE BASILICA

The Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington, DC, is the largest Roman Catholic church in North America and is among the ten largest churches in the world. Designated by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops as a National Sanctuary of Prayer and Pilgrimage, the Basilica is our nation's preeminent Marian shrine, dedicated to the patroness of the United States, the Blessed Virgin Mary under her title of the Immaculate Conception. This patronal church is home to over 80 chapels and oratories that honor the Mother of God and represent the peoples, cultures, and traditions that are the fabric of the Catholic faith and mosaic of our nation. Nearly a century in the making, this great Marian shrine, affectionately referred to as America's Catholic Church, has been a work in progress since the laying of its foundation stone in 1920. Now, as its one hundredth anniversary approaches, a monumental effort is underway to complete this "Hymn in Stone" as envisioned by its founder, Bishop Thomas J. Shahan, with the mosaic ornamentation of the Trinity Dome, its "Crowning Jewel."

### THE TRINITY DOME

The Trinity Dome is the central and largest dome of the Basilica. This "Crowning Jewel" will be adorned in mosaic according to the original iconographic scheme of the Great Upper Church and will depict the Most Holy Trinity, the Blessed Virgin Mary as the Immaculate Conception, and a procession of saints who have an association with the United States and the National Shrine. The procession of saints includes, among others, St. Juan Diego (the first canonized male Native American), St. Kateri Tekakwitha (the first canonized female Native American), St. Teresa of Calcutta (an honorary American citizen), St. Francis Cabrini, M.S.C. (the first U.S. citizen to be canonized), St. John Paul II (the first pope to visit the National Shrine), and St. Junípero Serra (declared a saint by Pope Francis at the Shrine in 2015 for the first canonization ever to take place on American soil). The Nicene Creed will encircle the base of the dome, while the dome's four pendentives will feature the four Evangelists: Matthew, Mark, Luke and John.

During his visit to the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception on September 23, 2015, Pope Francis blessed the preliminary segment of mosaic created for the Trinity Dome containing the words of the beginning and end of the Nicene Creed: "I believe in one God." "Amen."

### THE HERITAGE

The Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception exists today because of the generosity of American Catholics, the prayers of the faithful, and the hard work of the artisans and laborers who built it. This work, which began nearly 100 years ago by our ancestors, is an authentic reflection of the diversity of cultures and ethnicities represented throughout the United States. The Basilica truly exemplifies the universality of the American Catholic Church while echoing its unity and inclusiveness. The many chapels and oratories personify the cultural diversity of the United States and embrace our common Catholic faith — in particular, a devotion to the Blessed Mother under the title of Immaculate Conception.

This recurring theme of American Catholic heritage is manifested in the more than 80 unique chapels and oratories throughout the Basilica, all of which feature cultural representations of Our Lady from every corner of the globe and represent the history of the multi-ethnic communities that comprise the universal Church. Among the many nationalities enshrined in the chapels are African, Austrian, Chinese, Cuban, Czech, Filipino, French, German, Guamanian, Hungarian, Indian, Irish, Italian, Korean, Latin American, Lithuanian, Maltese, Polish, Slovak, Slovenian, and Vietnamese.

Every stone and artistic nuance of the Basilica proclaims our nation's relationship with Mary, a spiritual bond formalized in 1847 when Pope Pius IX proclaimed Mary "Patroness of the United States" under her title of the Immaculate Conception.

Pope John Paul II, the first reigning Pope to visit the National Shrine, beautifully proclaimed the magnitude of the cultural and ethnic heritage embodied in America's Catholic Church during his visit:

*"This Shrine speaks to us with the voice of all America, with the voice of all the sons and daughters of America, who have come here from the various countries of the Old World. When they came, they brought with them in their hearts the same love for the Mother of God that was characteristic of their ancestors and of themselves in their native lands. These people, speaking different languages, coming from different backgrounds of history and traditions in their own countries, came together around the heart of a Mother they all had in common. While their faith in Christ made all of them aware of being one People of God, this awareness became all the more vivid through the presence of the Mother in the work of Christ and the Church."* – October 7, 1979

The National Shrine conveys a remarkable story of the faith, devotion, struggles and triumphs of our nation's immigrant heritage and tells the story of the Catholic Church's emergence and evolution in this country, especially of the many hard-working men and women who, through much sacrifice, laid the foundations of their communities and ensured the expansion of the faith in the United States. Pope Benedict XVI summed it up well:

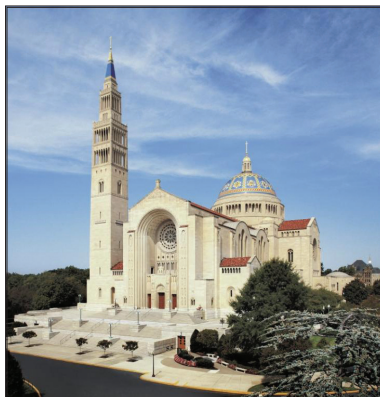
*"...I commend the Church in your country most particularly to the maternal care and intercession of Mary Immaculate, Patroness of the United States. May she who carried within her womb the hope of all nations intercede for the people of this country, so that all may be made new in Jesus Christ her Son."* – April 16, 2008

## IN-PEW COLLECTION

The completion of the Trinity Dome in preparation for the 100th anniversary of the laying of the foundation stone of the National Shrine in 2020 is a monumental undertaking for which the Bishops of the United States have approved a special one-time second collection to take place in-pew on Mother's Day 2017. This collection will provide the faithful with an opportunity to contribute to the legacy begun by their ancestors, to include honoring their Catholic heritage and entrusting themselves and their families to the Mother of God.

Funds for the completion of the Trinity Dome will be raised primarily through this national collection. In support of this collection, bilingual printed materials are available for each parish and include: posters, bulletin inserts, envelopes, prayer cards, and parish resource guides. Additional information about the National Shrine, the Trinity Dome, and this collection is available at [www.trinitydome.org](http://www.trinitydome.org).

## THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT OF THIS COLLECTION.



## ABOUT THE BASILICA OF THE NATIONAL SHRINE OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION AMERICA'S CATHOLIC CHURCH

The Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception is the largest Roman Catholic church in the United States and North America, and is one of the ten largest churches in the world.

Fulfilling its mission, the Basilica is a place of worship, pilgrimage, evangelization and reconciliation.

Designated by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops as a National Sanctuary of Prayer and Pilgrimage, the Basilica is the nation's preeminent Marian shrine, dedicated to the patroness of the United States—the Blessed Virgin Mary under her title of the Immaculate Conception. It is oftentimes affectionately referred to as America's Catholic Church.



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