

PRESS KIT



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THE BASILICA OF THE NATIONAL SHRINE
OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION

BASILICA - TRINITY DOME PROJECT OVERVIEW

- The Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception is the largest Roman Catholic Church in the United States and is among the ten largest churches in the world
- This great Marian shrine is the patronal church of the United States, dedicated to the patroness of our nation, the Blessed Virgin Mary, under her title, The Immaculate Conception
- The National Shrine is affectionately referred to as America's Catholic Church
- The National Shrine represents the diversity of the peoples, cultures, and traditions that are the fabric of our faith and mosaic of our nation, while exemplifying the unity and universality of the Church
- The National Shrine has been a century in the making and 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
- A monumental effort is underway to complete the Trinity Dome in advance of the year 2020, the 100th anniversary of the laying of the National Shrine's foundation stone
- The mosaic ornamentation of the Trinity Dome is the final step to completing this "Hymn in Stone" according to the original architectural plans and iconographic scheme
- The Trinity Dome mosaic will be the crowning jewel of the National Shrine
- Pope Francis blessed the preliminary segment of mosaic fabricated for the Trinity Dome during his visit to the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception on September 23, 2015
- Trinity Dome Project is a tremendous undertaking
- Prayers and donations are requested in support of this project
- Website www.trinitydome.org has been launched to raise awareness and funds
- Donations of all sizes are now being accepted at www.trinitydome.org or can be made by contacting the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception
- To assist in this effort, the Bishops of the United States have approved a special, one-time second collection to take place in parishes across the country on Mother's Day, May 14, 2017, in honor of Our Holy Mother, the Blessed Virgin Mary, the patroness of our nation
- Posters, bulletin inserts, prayer cards, parish resource guides, and envelopes will be made available for this special Mother's Day Collection for the Trinity Dome
- Please follow our progress on the fabrication and installation of the Trinity Dome mosaic by regularly visiting www.trinitydome.org for the latest news and information

TRINITY DOME FACT SHEET

SCAFFOLDING/WORK SITE

- Deck/Base of Enclosed Compartment – 6 Floors above the nave
- 8 floors of scaffolding rise above the deck in the enclosed compartment to the apex of the dome where the oculus marks 159 feet above the nave
- Deck is anchored into the structure of the Basilica, not from the floor
- Elevated deck and enclosed compartment allow for the regular schedule of Masses, Pilgrimages, Tours, and other events during the lengthy installation process

MOSAIC FABRICATION & INSTALLATION PROCESS

- One of the largest mosaic installations of its kind in the world
- Mosaic will be composed of more than 14 million tesserae (pieces) of Venetian Glass
- This specialized glass is handmade by only 2 families/companies in the world, in the environs of Venice, in a tradition that is centuries old
- More than 1,000 color variations of Venetian Glass will be used to create the mosaic
- Mosaic will cover over 18,300 square feet of the dome surface
- Mosaic will weigh 48,000 pounds/24 tons
- Fabrication of the mosaic has begun in Spilimbergo, Italy, by Travisanutto, using the Reverse or Indirect Method
- Invented in Italy in the late 19th century, the Reverse or Indirect Method allows for the creation of mosaics of a much greater scale, in a more reasonable timeframe and at a more reasonable cost. Fabricated in studio, the mosaic is created in reverse with the tesserae individually affixed by artisans' hands on sections of paper using a paste made from flour and water. Once all of the sections of mosaic are completed by hand on paper in the studio, they are delivered to the site for installation. Artisans then cement the sections to the surface of the wall/ceiling/dome according to precise mapping. (Prior to this method, mosaics was created onsite using the Direct Method in which the tesserae were directly cemented to the actual wall/ceiling/dome, piece by piece rather than section by section, taking at least three times as long to create the finished product)
- The entire Trinity Dome mosaic will be composed of over 30,000 sections
- The 30,000 sections of the mosaic "puzzle" will be shipped by air and boat from Venice, Italy, to the Basilica in 60 boxed crates
- Artisans will painstakingly and methodically install the mosaic, cementing the sections of the mosaic "puzzle" to the very precisely mapped dome, paper side showing
- Installation will take up to 8 or more months from delivery of the mosaic sections to the Basilica
- After the careful installation of all sections as mapped, the artisans will gently dissolve the paper and flour paste (to which the tesserae had been adhered), simply using water, soft brushes and sponges, to reveal the beautiful, new mosaic

ICONOGRAPHY/ARTISTIC DEPICTIONS OF THE TRINITY DOME MOSAIC

- The Most Holy Trinity – God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit
- The Immaculate Conception – the Blessed Virgin Mary, Patroness of the United States
- Procession of Saints & Angels:
 - Choir Angel
 - St. John Paul II (First pope to visit the National Shrine)
 - St. Rose Philippine Duchesne (4th Citizen of the United States to be canonized)
 - St. Elizabeth Ann Seton (1st native born female U.S. citizen canonized in 1975)
 - St. Juan Diego (Mexico/first Native American male canonized in 2002)
 - St. Kateri Tekakwitha (First female Native American canonized in 2012)
 - St. Junípero Serra (First saint canonized in the United States, in 2015 at the Basilica)
 - St. Katherine Drexel (5th U.S. Citizen to be canonized)
 - St. Martin de Porres (Depicted in the Basilica's Our Lady of Guadalupe Chapel, canonized in 1962)
 - St. Teresa of Calcutta (Honorary U.S. citizen; frequent visitor to the Basilica)
 - Archangel Michael (Patron of Military Services)
 - Archangel Gabriel (Angel of the Annunciation)
 - St. John XXIII (Pope at the time of the Shrine Dedication in 1959)
 - St. Francis Cabrini (1st U.S. Citizen canonized, in 1946)
 - St. Lorenzo Ruiz (1st canonized Filipino martyr, great devotion among ethnic communities)
 - St. Rose of Lima (first canonized saint of the New World; depicted in the Shrine's Guadalupe Chapel)
 - St. Damien of Moloka'i (cared for people with leprosy in the territory of Hawaii)
 - St. Marianne Cope (devoted her life to the care of people with leprosy alongside St. Damien)
 - St. John Neumann (first male U.S. citizen/American bishop, canonized in 1977)
 - St. Josephine Bakhita (Relic of the saint is in the altar of the Chapel to Our Mother of Africa)
 - Blessed Paul VI (visited Shrine in 1960 as an Archbishop, papal tiara on display at Basilica)
 - Choir Angel
- Nicene Creed (Text of the drum encircling the base of the Trinity Dome)

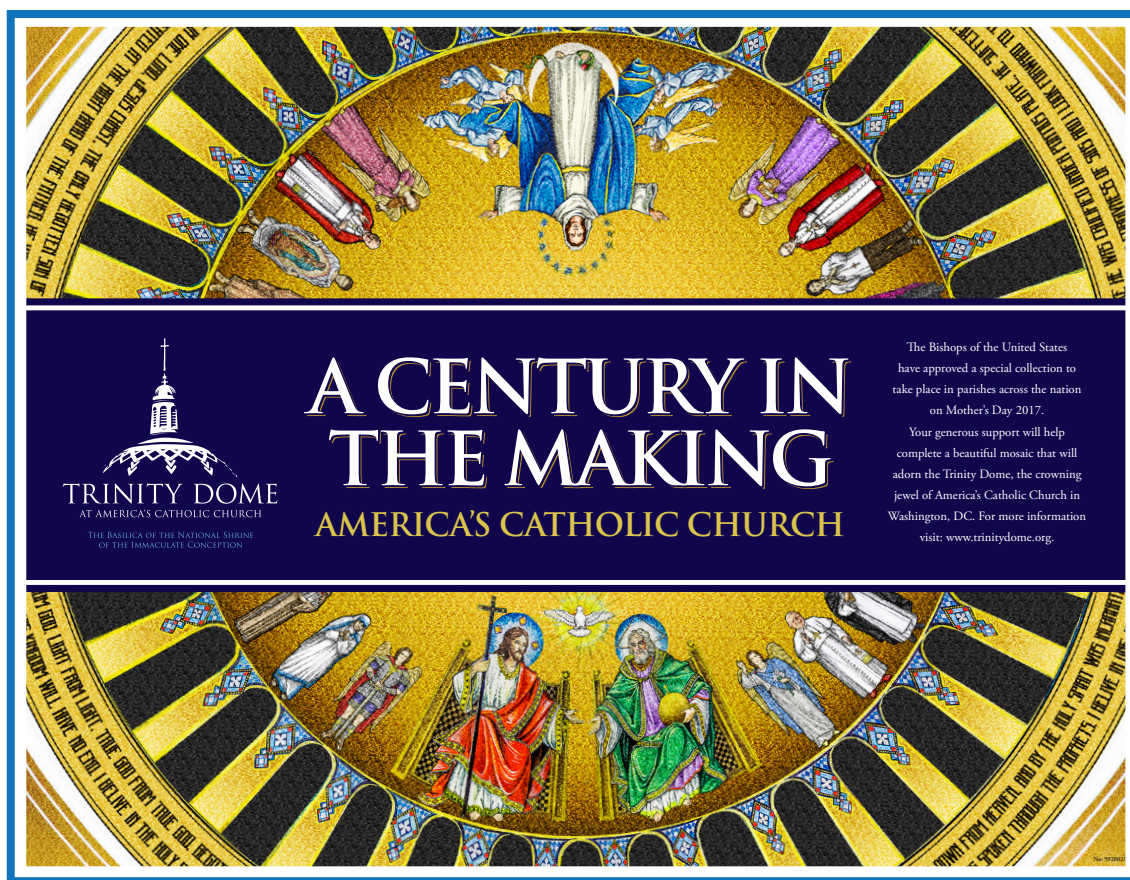
I believe in one God, the Father almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all things visible and invisible. I believe in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Only Begotten Son of God, born of the Father before all ages. God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, consubstantial with the Father; through him all things were made. For us men and for our salvation he came down from heaven, and by the Holy Spirit was incarnate of the Virgin Mary, and became man. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate, he suffered death and was buried, and rose again on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead and his kingdom will have no end. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son is adored and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets. I believe in one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church. I confess one Baptism for the forgiveness of sins and I look forward to the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. Amen.

- Four Evangelists: Matthew, Mark, Luke and John (Pendentives of the Dome)

ICONOGRAPHIC SCHEME OF THE GREAT UPPER CHURCH

“As in St. Mark's in Venice, the chief characteristics of the interior of the Shrine are a succession of decorated domes. Each dome is a unit in itself, leading to the last half dome of the apse of the church, the Christ in Majesty.” John de Rosen (1891-1982), artist consultant for the National Shrine

Dome I:	The Incarnation
Dome II:	The Redemption
Dome III:	The Trinity
Dome IV:	The Sanctification (Descent of the Holy Spirit)
Dome V:	The Glorification of the Lamb (The Triumph of the Lamb)
North Apse:	Christ in Majesty



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 | 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.

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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