

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: Maryland	
COUNTY: Baltimore City	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER 69-10-19-0010	DATE 10/1/69

1. NAME

COMMON:
Old Roman Catholic Cathedral (Basilica of the Assumption)

AND/OR HISTORIC:
Minor Basilica of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:
401 Cathedral Street

CITY OR TOWN:
Baltimore City

STATE Maryland	CODE 19	COUNTY: Baltimore City	CODE 510
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3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP		STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
District <input type="checkbox"/> Building <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Public <input type="checkbox"/>	Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/>	Occupied <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Yes: <input type="checkbox"/>
Site <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/>	Private <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	In Process <input type="checkbox"/>	Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/>	Restricted <input type="checkbox"/>
Object <input type="checkbox"/>	Both <input type="checkbox"/>	Being Considered <input type="checkbox"/>	Preservation work in progress <input type="checkbox"/>	Unrestricted <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
				No: <input type="checkbox"/>

PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/>	Government <input type="checkbox"/>	Park <input type="checkbox"/>	Transportation <input type="checkbox"/>	Comments <input type="checkbox"/>
Commercial <input type="checkbox"/>	Industrial <input type="checkbox"/>	Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/>	Other (Specify) <input type="checkbox"/>	
Educational <input type="checkbox"/>	Military <input type="checkbox"/>	Religious <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
Entertainment <input type="checkbox"/>	Museum <input type="checkbox"/>	Scientific <input type="checkbox"/>		

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNERS NAME:
Trustees of the Roman Catholic Cathedral

STREET AND NUMBER:
401 Cathedral Street

CITY OR TOWN: Baltimore City	STATE: Maryland	CODE 19
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5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.:
Land Record Office of the Superior Court of Baltimore City

STREET AND NUMBER:
Room 610, Baltimore City Court House

CITY OR TOWN: Baltimore City	STATE Maryland	CODE 19
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APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: .98 acre

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:
Maryland Register of historic sites and landmarks

DATE OF SURVEY: May 1969 Federal State County Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:
Maryland Historical Trust

STREET AND NUMBER:
P. O. Box 1704

CITY OR TOWN: Annapolis	STATE: Maryland 21404	CODE 19
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SEE INSTRUCTIONS

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7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	Excellent <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Good <input type="checkbox"/>	Fair <input type="checkbox"/>	Deteriorated <input type="checkbox"/>	Ruins <input type="checkbox"/>	Unexposed <input type="checkbox"/>
INTEGRITY	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	Altered <input type="checkbox"/>	Unaltered <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Moved <input type="checkbox"/>	Original Site <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (If known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

"...North America's most beautiful church...,"^{(1)*} says Nicholas Pevsner, noted architectural historian, and Henry-Russell Hitchcock has called the Basilica of the Assumption, "one of the finest ecclesiastical monuments of Romantic classicism."^{(2)*}

The cruciform building is of porphyritic granite, hauled by ox-cart from Ellicott City, Maryland. The portico, composed of ten fluted columns and Ionic pediment, was added in 1863 and covers a large central door, flanked by two smaller doors. On either side of the portico is a bell tower, topped by an onion-shaped dome. The bells within were manufactured in Marseilles, France, as was the clock in the southern tower. (These towers were not part of Latrobe's design.)

Along the building's sides are a series of carefully placed stained-glass windows, set in recessed arched panels. "A dome on an octagonal drum culminates the church, and one is conscious of a superbly successful handling of the combination of the sphere and the cube."^{(3)*}

* See #9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

8. SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

Pre-Columbian <input type="checkbox"/>	16th Century <input type="checkbox"/>	18th Century <input type="checkbox"/>	20th Century <input type="checkbox"/>
15th Century <input type="checkbox"/>	17th Century <input type="checkbox"/>	19th Century <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) **1806 (completed 1863)**

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

Aboriginal <input type="checkbox"/>	Education <input type="checkbox"/>	Political <input type="checkbox"/>	Urban Planning <input type="checkbox"/>
Prehistoric <input type="checkbox"/>	Engineering <input type="checkbox"/>	Religion/Phi- <input type="checkbox"/>	Other (Specify) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Historic <input type="checkbox"/>	Industry <input type="checkbox"/>	osophy <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<u>Architecture</u>
Agriculture <input type="checkbox"/>	Invention <input type="checkbox"/>	Science <input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Art <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Landscape <input type="checkbox"/>	Sculpture <input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Commerce <input type="checkbox"/>	Architecture <input type="checkbox"/>	Social/Human- <input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Communications <input type="checkbox"/>	Literature <input type="checkbox"/>	itarian <input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Conservation <input type="checkbox"/>	Military <input type="checkbox"/>	Theater <input type="checkbox"/>	_____
	Music <input type="checkbox"/>	Transportation <input type="checkbox"/>	_____

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE (Include Personages, Dates, Events, Etc.)

The first Roman Catholic Cathedral built in the United States, the Basilica of the Assumption was designed by Benjamin H. Latrobe. Construction was begun in 1806, on a lot acquired from Col. John Eager Howard, and added to from time to time until it was completed in 1863.

In 1789, an Episcopal See had been established in Baltimore and Reverend John Carroll, elected the first bishop, with a diocese covering thirteen states. Bishop Carroll ordered the building of the Cathedral and was consecrated Archbishop there in 1808. He is one of seven prelates (including James Cardinal Gibbons) buried in the crypt beneath the archepiscopal throne.

In addition, ten Provincial and three Plenary Councils have been held in the Basilica and thirty bishops have been consecrated there. Because of its unique role in the history of the Church in America, the Cathedral was elevated to the dignity of a minor Basilica by Pope Pius XI in 1937.

The archbishop's residence, which adjoins, was designed and built in 1830 by William L. Small.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Recorders: Romaine S. Somerville, Executive Secretary, and Catharine F. Black, Commission Member; Commission for Historic & Architectural Preservation, 402 City Hall, Baltimore, Maryland.

¹Pevsner, Nikolaus, An Outline of European Architecture (Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1963), pp. 441.

²Hitchcock, Henry-Russell, Architecture, 19th and 20th Centuries (Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1958), pp. 6.

[see continuation sheet]

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN ONE ACRE		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees	Minutes	Seconds
NW	° ' "	° ' "		°	'	"
NE	° ' "	° ' "				
SE	° ' "	° ' "		N39	17	39.5
SW	° ' "	° ' "		W76	36	59.2

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE:
Mrs. Preston Parish, Keeper of the Maryland Register

ORGANIZATION: Maryland Historical Trust DATE: June 16, 1969

STREET AND NUMBER:
P. O. Box 1704

CITY OR TOWN: Annapolis STATE: Maryland 21404 CODE: 19

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National State Local

Name Orlando Ridout IV
Title State Liaison Officer for Maryland
Date June 17, 1969

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.

August Allen Connally
Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date OCT 1 1969

ATTEST:
William J. Hunter, 2
Keeper of The National Register

Date SEP 20 1969

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

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INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Continuation Sheet)

STATE Maryland	
COUNTY Baltimore City	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

(Number all entries)

Old Roman Catholic Cathedral
(Basilica of the Assumption)

#6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

Historic American Building Survey

January 1964

Library of Congress

Washington, D. C. Code: 08

#9. REFERENCES

³Howland, Richard Hubbard, and Elizabeth Patterson Spencer, The Architecture of Baltimore (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1953), pp. 47-49.

Rains, Albert, and Laurance G. Henderson, With Heritage So Rich (New York: Random House, 1966), Plate 27.

Scharf, J. Thomas, History of Baltimore City and County, Maryland (Baltimore: pub. 1881), pp. 530-534.

Land Record Office of the Superior Court of Baltimore City, Maryland. Liber: WG 137 Folio: 662.