

Form 10-300
(Dec. 1968)UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICENATIONAL 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

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 ☐ Government ☐ Park ☐ Transportation ☐ Comments ☐

Commercial ☐ Industrial ☐ Private Residence ☐ Other (Specify) ☐

Educational ☐ Military ☐ Religious ☒

Entertainment ☐ Museum ☐ Scientific ☐

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

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

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 CODE: 21404 19

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

 STATE: Maryland
 COUNTY: Baltimore City
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 DATE

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 monu-
 ments 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 pedi-
 ment, 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 care-
 fully 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 ☐16th Century ☐18th Century ☐20th Century ☐15th Century ☐17th Century ☐19th Century ☒

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

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

Aboriginal ☐Education ☐Political ☐Urban Planning ☐Prehistoric ☐Engineering ☐

Religion/Phi-

Other (Specify) ☒Historic ☐Industry ☐osophy ☒ArchitectureAgriculture ☐Invention ☐Science ☐Art ☒Landscape ☐Sculpture ☐Commerce ☐Architecture ☐

Social/Human-

Communications ☐Literature ☐itarian ☐Conservation ☐Military ☐Theater ☐Music ☐Transportation ☐

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	Degrees Minutes Seconds	
NW	° ' "	° ' "		° ' "	° ' "	
NE	° ' "	° ' "		° ' "	° ' "	
SE	° ' "	° ' "		° ' "	° ' "	
SW	° ' "	° ' "		° ' "	° ' "	

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
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 03 1969

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
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.