

PH# 367788

# DATA SHEET

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED JUN 21 1977

DATE ENTERED DEC 16 1977

## NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS  
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

### 1 NAME

HISTORIC  
 AND/OR COMMON

Cathedral of St. John the Baptist

### LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER  
Main and Grand Streets

CITY, TOWN  
Paterson

STATE  
New Jersey

VICINITY OF  
8

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT  
8

COUNTY  
Passaic

CODE  
34

CODE  
031

### CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE	
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL	<input type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL	<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	<b>PUBLIC ACQUISITION</b>	<b>ACCESSIBLE</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

### OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME  
Roman Catholic Diocese of Paterson

STREET & NUMBER  
Chancery Office, 24 DeGrasse Street

CITY, TOWN  
Paterson

STATE  
New Jersey

### LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.  
Passaic County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER  
Hamilton Street

CITY, TOWN  
Paterson

STATE  
New Jersey

### 6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE  
New Jersey Historic Sites Inventory

DATE  
1976

DEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS  
Office of Historic Preservation, Dept. of Environmental Protection

CITY, TOWN  
Trenton

STATE  
New Jersey

# 7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED      DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

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## DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Cathedral of St. John the Baptist, now principal church of the Diocese of Paterson, has symbolized for over a century and a half the spiritual aspirations of the Catholic faithful in and about Paterson.

The Cathedral is located almost in the heart of Paterson's bustling financial district, and is similar in architecture to the much larger and more venerable Gothic structures of Europe.

The cornerstone of the Cathedral was laid on September 10, 1865. (1) Nearly five years later, on July 31, 1870, the building was dedicated and ready for the use of the congregation. (2) It was finally consecrated on June 29, 1890.(3)

Designed by architect P. C. Keely of New York, the Cathedral of St. John the Baptist is largely constructed of brownstone, most of which was obtained from local quarries in Little Falls and dressed at the site of construction.

The building occupies a plot of land measuring 88' x 180'. On the Main Street side, twin turrets rise to a peak of 90 feet, and from that point are carried an additional 30 feet higher. Worshippers have access to the Cathedral on Main Street via two doors, the arch over which measures 30 feet. The Grand Street side of the Cathedral reveals a square tower approximately 100 feet high. It is in turn adorned by a brownstone spire rising 225 feet from the ground.(4)

While non-structural changes have been made to the interior of the Cathedral because of the modern Catholic liturgy, steps have been taken to avoid compromising the architectural grandeur of the original designs. One's eye is still arrested by the lofty trefoil stone columns that soar 60 feet from the floor of the Cathedral, and support the weight of the English slate roof. (5) Other outstanding elements of the interior, such as the exquisite stained glass windows, and the Gothic-style altar, have not undergone extensive alteration.

The current seating capacity of the Cathedral is between 1700 and 1800 persons.(6)

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- (1) Charles A. Shriner, History of the Catholic in Paterson, (Paterson: 1883), p. 26.
  - (2) W. Woodford Clayton and William Nelson, (eds.), History of Bergen and Passaic Counties, New Jersey, (Philadelphia, Everts and Peck: 1882), p. 503, hereinafter cited as Clayton and Nelson, History of Bergen and Passaic Counties.
  - (3) James A. Sweeney, A Century of Catholic Progress in Paterson, New Jersey, (Paterson, St. John's R. C. Parish: 1921), p. 13.
  - (4) Clayton and Nelson, History of Bergen and Passaic Counties, p. 504.
  - (5) Ibid., p. 504.
  - (6) William Nelson and Charles A. Shriner, History of Paterson and Its Environs, (New York, Lewis Historical Publishing Company: 1920), II, p. 469.



# 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Burke, George H. "Dean McNulty," Bulletin of the Passaic County Historical Society, 1, No. 3, (September, 1929), pp. 22-24.

Clayton, W. Woodford and William Nelson (eds.). History of Bergen and Passaic Counties, New Jersey. Philadelphia, Everts and Peck: 1882.

# 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 3 acres CITY BLOCK 6 APPROXIMATELY 2 BLOCKS  
 UTM REFERENCES LEBOVICH  
12/14/77

A	1 8	5 6 9 6 8 10	4 5 2 9 1 8 10	B			
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C				D			

## VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The nominated property occupies the city block which is bounded by Grand St., Main St., Hamilton Ave., and De Grasse St.

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

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

# 11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE	E. A. Smyk, Passaic County Historian	revisions by Terry Karschner Office of Historic Preservation, DEP
ORGANIZATION	Office of the Passaic County Historian	DATE
STREET & NUMBER	Lambert Castle	(201) 525-5000
	Garret Mountain Reservation	TELEPHONE
CITY OR TOWN	Paterson, New Jersey 07503	STATE

# 12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL \_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_ LOCAL X

As the designated State Historic Preservation 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.

Deputy *[Signature]*  
 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

TITLE Assistant Commissioner, Dept. of Environmental Protection DATE 6/13/77

FOR NPS USE ONLY	
I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER	
DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHITECTURE AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION	DATE <u>12/16/77</u>
ATTEST: <i>[Signature]</i>	KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER
KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER	DATE <u>12.15.77</u>

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INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

Cathedral of St. John the Baptist

Paterson

Passaic County New Jersey 034

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SIGNIFICANCE

By the middle of the 1820's, there were definite indications that the local Catholic population was expanding.(3) Then, coupled with the tremendous growth of Paterson industries, there was an insistent demand for skilled millhands and other types of workers. By 1870, the U. S. Census reported that Irish immigrants constituted the dominant foreign-born population in the city.(4)

The majority of the Irish, along with other immigrant classes, lived in ramshackle tenement houses within almost walking distance of the great mills. Most conspicuously, the Irish clustered about Grand Street, and this area became known as the "Dublin" section of Paterson. It was there, among the Irish-Catholic immigrants, that Father McNulty began his priestly duties.

Two years after arriving in Paterson to take "...charge of the fortunes and spiritual welfare ...." of the rapidly growing Catholic population, Father McNulty raised enough money to purchase sixteen lots from the powerful industrial corporation, the Society for Establishing Useful Manufactures ("S.U.M."). Thus, at the northeast corner of Main and Grand Streets, the new St. John's Church was to be built. Interestingly enough, the cost of the property (\$10,000) was paid off within two months, and shortly thereafter, New York architect P. C. Keely was retained in order to develop plans "for an edifice ... unequalled in New Jersey." (5)

The Cathedral was ready for use in the summer of 1870, and a final tabulation a number of years later revealed that approximately \$200,000 had been spent in the course of construction. (6)

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(3) D. Stanton Hammond, (ed.), "Rev. Samuel Fisher's Census of Paterson, N.J. (1825-1832), Bulletin of the Passaic County Historical Society, V, Nos. 11 and 12 (August, 1958), pp. 66-67. According to Dr. Fisher, Pastor of the First Presbyterian Church, who prepared the census as a public service, 113 people were enumerated as heads of Catholic families in 1825. In 1827, the number was 140; in 1829, there were 196.

(4) Clayton and Shriner, History of Bergen and Passaic Counties, p. 406.

(5) Ibid., p. 503.

(6) Ibid., p. 504.

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SIGNIFICANCE

One Church historian has summarized Father McNulty's contribution in this way: "As group after group of European immigrants reached the city of Paterson, this good shepherd brought them together at St. John's. When they were ready to be on their own, he bought the land and erected churches for them." (7) Under Father McNulty's benevolent guidance, the parishes of St. Joseph, St. Mary, St. Agnes, St. Bonaventure, Our Lady of Victory and St. Michael were organized. (8) In retrospect, the Cathedral of St. John the Baptist is as much a testament to Father McNulty's love for humanity as it is a monument to catholicism.

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(7) Sister Marie Edith, (comp), St. John's Parish: One Hundred and Fifty Years, (Paterson, New Jersey: 1971), p. 11.

(8) Ibid.

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(1825-1832)," Bulletin of the Passaic County Historical Society,  
V, Nos. 11 and 12 (August, 1958), 82 pp.

Shriner, Charles A. History of the Catholic Church in Paterson, Paterson: 1883.

Sweeney, James A. A Century of Catholic Progress in Paterson, New Jersey.  
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Kervick, Francis. Patrick Charles Keely, Architect: A Record of His Life and  
Work. Notre Dame, 1953.

National Register of Historic Places. 1976. (pp. 298, 466, 672).