

SAINT
PATRICK'S
CATHEDRAL

— THE LEGACY OF —
AMERICA'S PARISH CHURCH



Saint Patrick's Day Parade, 2015

**To those who have generously given in support
of the restoration of Saint Patrick's Cathedral.**



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Cathedral nave

A HOUSE OF PRAYER

PREFACE

*His Excellency, Archbishop Carlo Maria Viganò,
is the Apostolic Nuncio to the United States.*



At the gracious invitation of His Eminence, Timothy Michael Cardinal Dolan, the Tenth Archbishop of New York, I have been given the honor to share in the joy of the completed restoration of Saint Patrick's Cathedral by offering some reflections in the Preface of this beautiful commemorative edition. And I do so with a particular sensitivity as to how, especially in recent times, Saint Patrick's Cathedral, located in the heart of a great Metropolis, has captured the attention of the Successors of Peter.

Indeed, it was on October 4, 1965, the feast of Saint Francis of Assisi, as the Second Vatican Council was nearing its close, that His Holiness Pope Paul VI — now Blessed — visited Saint Patrick's Cathedral during his historic one-day journey to address the United Nations as a pilgrim of peace. As the first Pope to travel to the United States of America, the Holy Father was welcomed here with a tremendous outpouring of love and affection.

During the Centennial Year of Saint Patrick's Cathedral, October 2, 1979, a young Pope John Paul II — now Saint John Paul II — visited as well, praying on that occasion: "may the spires of Saint Patrick's Cathedral always reflect the thrust with which the Church fulfills her fundamental function in every age: 'to direct man's gaze, to point the awareness and experience of the whole of humanity towards the mystery of God, to help all men and women to be familiar with the profundity of the Redemption taking place in Christ Jesus.'" (*Redemptor Hominis*, 10)

As part of his Apostolic Journey to the United States, His Holiness Pope Benedict XVI — now Emeritus — celebrated Holy Mass here on April 19, 2008, with the clergy and men and women in consecrated life, remarking during his homily, "I am particularly happy that we have gathered in Saint Patrick's Cathedral. Perhaps more than any other church in the United States, this place is known and loved as 'a house of prayer for all peoples' (cf. Isaiah 56:7; Mark 11:17). Each day thousands of men, women, and children enter its doors to find peace within its walls."

And most recently, of course, the Archdiocese of New York and the New York community welcomed with open arms His Holiness Pope Francis.

Many countless souls have zealously labored with perseverance, hard work, and generosity to keep the vision of The Most Reverend John Hughes, the First Archbishop of New York, alive and well, paving the way for this day. It is my fervent hope that Saint Patrick's Cathedral, for generations to come, will continue to be "a house of prayer for all peoples," where those in material and spiritual need will find peace and consolation, experiencing the joy of the Gospel. May the renewed and revitalized beauty of this Neo-Gothic cathedral continue to help the marginalized, the poor, and the suffering to lift their gaze upward in hope.

But, even more apropos, are thoughts taken from a Sermon of Saint Augustine:

"WE ARE GATHERED TOGETHER TO CELEBRATE THE DEDICATION OF A HOUSE OF PRAYER.
THIS IS OUR HOUSE OF PRAYER, BUT WE TOO ARE A HOUSE OF GOD. IF WE ARE A HOUSE OF GOD,
ITS CONSTRUCTION GOES ON IN TIME SO THAT IT MAY BE DEDICATED AT THE END OF TIME.
THE HOUSE, IN ITS CONSTRUCTION, INVOLVES HARD WORK, WHILE ITS DEDICATION IS AN OCCASION
FOR REJOICING...BUT CHRISTIANS DO NOT MAKE A HOUSE OF GOD UNTIL THEY ARE ONE IN CHARITY...
THE WORK WE SEE COMPLETE IN THIS BUILDING IS PHYSICAL; IT SHOULD FIND ITS SPIRITUAL COUNTERPART
IN YOUR HEARTS. WE SEE HERE THE FINISHED PRODUCT OF STONE AND WOOD;
SO TOO YOUR LIVES SHOULD REVEAL THE HANDIWORK OF GOD'S GRACE."

(SERMON 336)

Child Jesus statue behind High Altar