

St. Patrick's Cathedral (Manhattan)

The Cathedral of St. Patrick (commonly called **St. Patrick's Cathedral**) is a Decorated Neo-Gothic Roman Catholic cathedral in the United States and a prominent landmark of New York City. It is the seat of the archbishop of the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of New York as well as parish church, located on the east side of Fifth Avenue between 50th and 51st Streets in Midtown Manhattan, directly across the street from Rockefeller Center, facing the *Atlas* statue and the International Building. It is considered one of the most visible symbols of Roman Catholicism in New York City and the United States.

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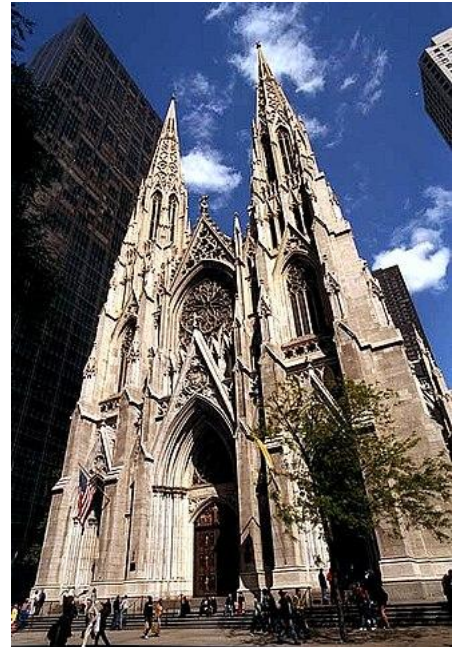
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St. Patrick's Cathedral



Location	Midtown Manhattan, New York City, New York
Country	United States
Denomination	Roman Catholic
Tradition	Latin Rite
Website	St. Patrick's Cathedral (http://www.saintpatrickscathedral.org)
History	
Status	Cathedral
Dedication	Saint Patrick
Dedicated	October 5, 1910
Earlier dedication	May 29, 1879
Architecture	
Functional status	Active
Architect(s)	James Renwick Jr.
Architectural	Church

History

Purchase of the property

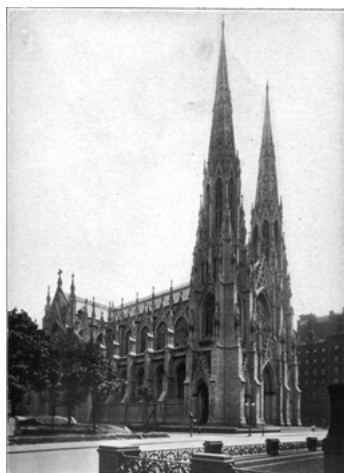
The land on which the present cathedral stands was purchased in 1810.^{[5][6]} The Jesuit community built a college on the site,^[7] three miles north of the city. It contained a "fine old house" which was fitted with a chapel of St. Ignatius.^[8] The school closed in 1814 and the Jesuits sold the lot to the diocese. In 1813, the diocese gave use of the property to Dom Augustin LeStrange, abbot of a community of Trappists (from the original monastery of La Trappe) who came to America fleeing persecution by French authorities. In addition to a small monastic community, they also looked after some thirty-three orphans. With the downfall of Napoleon in that year, the Trappists returned to France in 1815, abandoning the property. The property at this point was designated for a future cemetery. The neighboring orphanage was maintained by the diocese into the late nineteenth century. Some of the Trappists resettled to Canada and eventually founded St. Joseph's Abbey in Spencer, Massachusetts.^[9]

Bishop DuBois reopened the chapel in 1840 for Catholics employed at the Deaf and Dumb Asylum and in the general neighborhood.^[8] A modest frame church was built for the parish of St. John the Evangelist and dedicated May 9, 1841, by the Rev. John Hughes, administrator of the diocese. Tickets were sold to the dedication to ease the parish's debt level, managed by a lay Board of Trustees, but to no avail and the property mortgage was finally foreclosed on and the church sold at auction in 1844.^[8] The stress is said to have contributed to the death that year of the church's pastor, the Rev. Felix Larkin.^[8] The experience was blamed on the management of the trustees and this incident is said to have played a significant role in the abolishment of the lay trusteeship, which occurred shortly thereafter.^[8] The young and energetic Rev. Michael A. Curran was appointed to raise funds for the devastated parish, and shortly fitted up an old college hall as a temporary church.^[8] Fr. Curran continued raising funds to buy back the church during the Great Famine in Ireland, eventually succeeding and taking the deed in his own name.^[8] "The site of St. Patrick's Cathedral, hence, came to the Church through the labors of this young priest and the self-denial of his countrymen and not by the gift of the city."^[8] The debt was finally all paid for by 1853 when it was clear a large church was needed and the site was selected as

type	
Style	Decorated Neo-Gothic
Specifications	
Length	396.7 feet (120.9 m)
Number of spires	2
Spire height	329.5 feet (100.4 m) ^[1]
Materials	Tuckahoe marble
Bells	19 (29,122.73 lbs)
Administration	
Archdiocese	Archdiocese of New York
Clergy	
Archbishop	Timothy Michael Cardinal Dolan
Rector	Rev. Msgr. Robert T. Ritchie
Laity	
Director of music	Dr. Jennifer Pascual
Organist(s)	Daniel Brondel Michael Hey
RCIA coordinator	Sueanne Nilsen
St. Patrick's Cathedral Complex	
	U.S. National Register of Historic Places
	U.S. National Historic Landmark
	New York City Landmark

appropriate for the new cathedral.^[8]

Construction



1913 photograph of the cathedral

The Diocese of New York, created in 1808, was made an archdiocese by Pope Pius IX on July 19, 1850. In 1853, Archbishop John Joseph Hughes announced his intention to erect a new cathedral to replace the Old Saint Patrick's Cathedral in Lower Manhattan. The new cathedral was designed by James Renwick Jr. in the Gothic Revival style. On August 15, 1858, the cornerstone was laid, just south of the diocese's orphanage. At that time, present-day midtown

Manhattan was far north of the populous areas of New York City.^[10]

Work began in 1858 but was halted during the Civil War and resumed in 1865. The cathedral was completed in 1878 and dedicated on May 25, 1879, its huge proportions dominating the midtown of that time. The archbishop's house and rectory were added in 1880, both by James Renwick Jr., and an adjacent school (no longer in existence) opened in 1882.^[11] The spires were added in 1888, and at 329 feet and 6 inches (100.4 meters) were the tallest structures in New York City and the second highest in the United States.^[1] An addition on the east, including a Lady chapel, designed by Charles T. Mathews, was constructed from 1901 to 1906.^[11] The Lady Chapel's stained-glass windows were made between 1912 and 1930 by English stained glass artist and designer Paul Vincent Woodroffe.^[12] In 1927 and 1931, the cathedral was renovated, which included enlarging the sanctuary and installing the great organ.^[13]

Restoration

An extensive restoration of the cathedral was begun in 2012 and lasted 3 years at a cost of \$177 million.^[14] Overseen by MBB Architects (Murphy Burnham & Buttrick) and Construction Manager Structure Tone, the award-winning restoration reversed decades of decay and soot.^{[15][16]} The restoration was completed by September 17, 2015, before Pope Francis visited the cathedral on



Location within Manhattan

- Show map of Manhattan
- Show map of New York City
- Show map of New York
- Show map of the United States
- Show all

Coordinates	40°45′31″N 73°58′35″W﻿ / ﻿40.75833°N 73.97639°W﻿ / 40.75833; -73.97639
Area	2 acres (0.81 ha)
Built	1878
NRHP reference #	76001250 (https://npgallery.nps.gov/AssetDetail/NRIS/76001250)

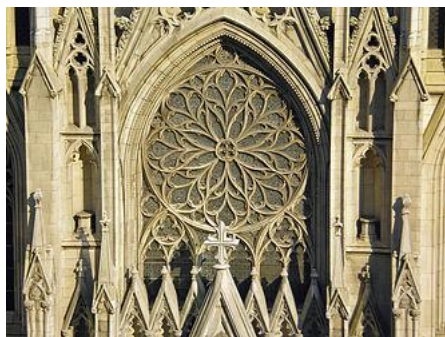
Significant dates

Added to NRHP	December 8, 1976 ^[3]
Designated NHL	December 8, 1976 ^[4]
Designated NYCL	October 19, 1966 ^[2]

September 24 and 25, 2015.^[17] The restoration cleaned the exterior marble, repaired stained-glass windows, and painted the ceiling, repaired the flooring and steps, among many restorations.^[18] The cathedral and the renovations were featured on WNET's television program *Treasures of New York*.^[19]

In 2017, MBB Architects and Structure Tone, along with Landmark Facilities Group and P.W. Grosser, completed the design and installation of a new geothermal system believed to be the largest in New York City.^[20] The geothermal system replaced the steam radiators and 1960s-era air conditioning in the cathedral.

Crimes and terrorism



Facade detail (September 2006)

On October 13, 1914, a bomb exploded on the northwest corner of St. Patrick's Cathedral.^[21] It caused a panic, but not severe damage, and tore an 18-inch hole in the floor. Despite a full church that day, there was only one victim – a young boy – whose head was grazed by a flying piece of metal. Authorities believed this event was linked to another bombing earlier that day, downtown at St. Alphonsus Church on West Broadway.^[22] There were no arrests made that day.

In March 1915, Italian anarchists Frank Abarno and Carmine Carbone of the Bresci Circle, were arrested for attempting to detonate a bomb in the cathedral. Abarno and Carbone were under the influence of Luigi Galleani. Abarno was in St. Patrick's ready to light the bomb fuse when Amedeo Polignani, a New York City police detective, who had gone undercover to infiltrate the group, intervened. Polignani had been operating under the direction of the head of the bomb squad, Thomas Tunney. Abarno was arrested at the scene and Carbone was arrested at his home. The two defendants claimed entrapment, but were nonetheless convicted and given sentences of between 6 and 12 years.^{[23][24][25]}

In the 1950s, starting in January 1951, a letter threatened that a bomb would be set off at a Sunday mass, and there would be five more threats between December 1951 and July 1952. On July 12, a voice over the telephone warned "your beautiful cathedral will be blown up before midnight."^[26]

On December 10, 1989, ACT UP, a pressure group that advocates for AIDS awareness, led a demonstration outside the cathedral as part of their Stop the Church campaign. This campaign was mounted out of disagreement with the Roman Catholic Church's stance on birth control, sex education in the public schools, and abortion. Approximately 4500 people took part. Of these, 130 proceeded to infiltrate the church and disrupted the mass, forcing Cardinal John O'Connor to abandon his sermon. Some of the slogans they chanted included "Stop Killing Us" and "You say, Don't Fuck; we say, Fuck You!"^[27] Several protestors laid down in the pews or the aisles to simulate death, while some others threw condoms around the area. One protester walked up to the altar, grabbed a communion wafer and broke it on the floor, saying "This is what I think of your God."^[28]

On April 18, 2019, just two days after a fire tore through the Notre-Dame cathedral in Paris, a 37-year-old New Jersey man carrying a pair of full two-gallon cans of gasoline, two bottles of lighter fluid, and two extended butane lighters was arrested after attempting to enter the Cathedral. The man was

initially turned away by a church security officer. As the man exited, some gasoline spilled on the floor. The security officer then notified two police officers outside the cathedral, who caught up to the man and questioned him.^[29]

Architectural features

St. Patrick's Cathedral is the largest decorated Neo-Gothic-style Catholic cathedral in North America. The cathedral, which can accommodate 3,000 people, is built of brick clad in marble, quarried in Massachusetts and New York. The main block of the cathedral is made of Tuckahoe marble.^[30] It takes up a whole city block, between 50th and 51st Streets and between Madison and Fifth Avenues. At the transepts, it is 174 feet (53.0 meters) wide and 332 feet (101.2 meters) long. The spires rise 330 feet (100.6 meters) from street level. The slate for the roof came from Monson, Maine.^[12]

Stained glass



Stained glass example

The windows were made by artists in Boston, Massachusetts, and European artists from Chartres, France, and Birmingham, England. Charles Connick created the rose window.^[12]

Altar

The Roman artist Paolo Medici designed the Saint Elizabeth altar. The Saint Jean-Baptiste de La Salle altar, one of the few original side-chapel altars, was sculpted by Dominic Borgia. The Papal bull is featured in the adjoining stained-glass window. Tiffany & Co. designed the Saint Louis and the Saint Michael altar.^[12]

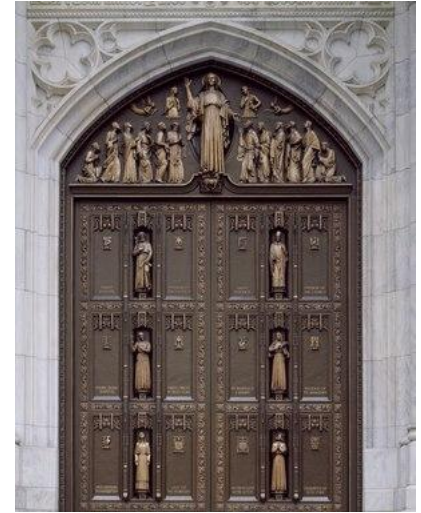
In the late 1930s and early 1940s, there was a renovation of the cathedral's main altar area under the guidance of Archbishop Francis Spellman, who later became cardinal. The previous high altar and reredos were removed and are now located at Spellman's alma mater, Fordham University, in the University Church. The new items include the sanctuary bronze baldachin and the rose stained-glass window. The altar was further renovated in the 1980s under the direction of Cardinal John Joseph O'Connor. To be more visible to the congregation, a stone altar was built from sections of the side altars and added to the middle of the sanctuary.^[12] However, this altar was removed in 2013.

Art works

The Pietà, sculpted by William Ordway Partridge, is three times larger than Michelangelo's Pietà. The cathedral's Stations of the Cross won an 1893 artistry prize at Chicago's World's Columbian Exposition. Commemorating his visit to the city in 1979, Pope John Paul II's bust is located in the rear of the cathedral.^[12]

Doors

The bronze doors that are the main entrance to the church are decorated with relief sculptures representing six people, including three women, with inscriptions indicating their significance to the cathedral and with particular focus on missionary work and assistance for migrants.^[31]



The bronze doors of the cathedral, prior to restoration.

- St. Joseph, "patron of the church" (top left)
- St. Patrick, "patron of this church" (top right)
- St. Isaac Jogues Martyr, "first [catholic] priest in New York" (middle left)
- St. Frances X Cabrini, "mother of the immigrant" (middle right). The founder of the Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, an organisation which supported Italians migrating in the US.
- Ven Kateri Tekakwitha, "lily of the Mohawks". The first Native American woman to be canonized by the Catholic Church (bottom left)
- Mother Elizabeth Seton, "daughter of New York" (bottom right). Whose family were among of the earliest European settlers to the area, and first native-born U.S. citizen to be canonized.

Each door is 16.5 by 5.5 feet (5.0 by 1.7 m) and weighs 9,200 pounds (4,200 kg). They were designed by Charles Maginnis, sculptured by John Angel, and inaugurated in 1949. In 2013 a three-year restoration to the doors was concluded.^[32]

Saint Charbel Shrine

On October 28, 2017, a shrine to the Lebanese Maronite Saint Charbel Makhoul was inaugurated at St. Patrick's Cathedral.^[33] The Lebanese Maronite Patriarch Bechara Boutros al-Rahi attended the inauguration ceremony giving his blessing and a dedication, as well as Cardinal Timothy M. Dolan. The shrine features a mosaic of Saint Charbel Makhoul along with national Lebanese emblems such as the Lebanon cedar and a relic of the Saint, and was donated by SGBL bank chairman Antoun Sehnaoui in the name of his parents, May and Nabil Sehnaoui.^[34]

Music

Organs

St. Patrick's Cathedral has two pipe organs. The Gallery Organ is located in the Choir Gallery below the Rose Window over the Fifth Avenue entrance and in the Triforium, near the South Transept. The Chancel Organ is located in the North Ambulatory next to the Chapel of St. Joseph.

First organs

The first organ in the Cathedral was built by George Jardine & Son, one of New York's most distinguished organ builders, and installed in 1879. It was composed of 4 manuals with 51 stops and 56 ranks.

In 1880, J.H. & C.S. Odell, then also from New York City, installed an organ in the chancel. It was composed of 2 manuals with 20 stops and 23 ranks.

Kilgen organs

With the addition to the music staff of Pietro Yon in 1927, plans were initiated to replace the organs. The firm of George Kilgen & Son of St. Louis, Missouri, was engaged to build two new instruments according to designs which were heavily influenced by the Cathedral's world-renowned organist.

During the building period it was determined that the Gallery would need to be extended to accommodate the new Gallery Organ. In the late 1920s, a concrete reinforced extension to the original Gallery was constructed.

The Chancel Organ was dedicated on January 30, 1928. It is encased in a carved oak screen ornamented with Gothic elements of design and symbolism. It had 1,480 pipes; located on the opposite side of the Ambulatory, diagonally across from the console.

The Gallery Organ, dedicated on February 11, 1930, required three years to build at a cost of \$250,000. It has one of the nation's most glorious wood facades. It was designed by Robert J. Reiley, consulting architect of the Cathedral, and is adorned with angels and Latin inscriptions. It contained 7,855 pipes ranging in length from thirty-two feet to one-half inch. The longest pipes run horizontally across the North and South Triforia.

In the 1940s and 1950s tonal changes were made. In the 1970s and 1980s additional renovations were made by Jack Steinkampf of Yonkers, New York, particularly in the revoicing of flutes and reeds, and the addition of the Trompette en Chamade.

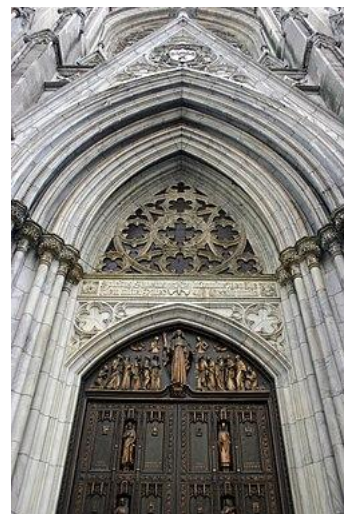
Peragallo restoration

In 1993, it was decided that the organs need to undergo major restoration. The first and most essential part of the restoration project was to acquire new consoles for both the Gallery and Chancel Organs to replace the original ones which had deteriorated beyond repair. Twin five-manual consoles were constructed by Robert Turner of Hacienda Heights, California. Solid State Logic, Ltd. of England designed and engineered the combination action. The use of fiber-optic wiring enables both consoles to control the Gallery, Chancel and Nave Organs at the same time. Installation of the Gallery console was finished in time for Christmas Midnight Mass in 1993. The Chancel console was installed in early 1994.

For six weeks in January and February 1994, scaffolding filled the Gallery to provide access for wood craftsmen to begin the arduous process of cleaning, repairing, and oiling the hand-carved organ facade. Meanwhile, the Peragallo Pipe Organ Company of Paterson, New Jersey had been awarded the



Interior



Detail of the entrance
(October 2007)

contract to clean and restore all of the pipework as well as the chests and wind systems. Their first task was to remove all the facade pipes for cleaning and refinishing. It was decided to return the pipework to its original zinc finish, only adding a protective coating to avoid oxidation in the future. After completing work on the facade, Peragallo moved to the interior of the instrument for the purpose of restoring the Great, Choir, Swell, Solo, String and Pedal divisions. The entire Chancel Organ was restored in 1995. Finally, the Echo Organ, situated in the triforium near the center crossing, underwent tonal modifications, making it more useful as the Nave Organ. The organ work was finished in 1997.

The Organs were blessed on September 15, 2007 celebrating the 10th anniversary of their renovations and inaugurating the Bicentennial Concert Series with a performance James E. Goettsche, the Vatican Organist.

The Organs consist of more than 9,000 pipes, 206 stops, 150 ranks and 10 divisions.

Organists and music directors



View from Rockefeller Center (2016)

Name	Title	Years
William F. Pecher	Organist (and Director of Music)	1879–1904
Jacques C. Ungerer	Assistant Organist and Director of Chancel Choir Organist (and Director of Music)	1893-1904 1904–1929
<u>Pietro A. Yon</u>	Assistant Organist Director of Music	1927–1929 1929–1943
Msgr. Joseph I. Rostagno	Vice-Director of Music	1929–1935
Paolo Giaquinto	First Assistant Organist	1930–1933
Edward Rivetti	Assistant Organist	1933–1972
<u>Dr. Charles M. Courboin</u>	Director of Music	1943–1970
John Grady	Director of Music and Organist	1970–1990
Donald Dumler	Associate Organist Principal Organist Principal Organist Emeritus	1970–1990 1990–2014 Named 2014
John-Michael Caprio	Director of Music	1990–1997
Alan Davis	Associate Organist	1991–1995
Stephen J. Tharp	Associate Organist	1995–1996
Stanley H. Cox	Associate Organist	1997–2007
Robert Long	Director of Music	1999–2001
Don Stefano Concordia	Director of Music	2001
Johannes Somary	Director of Music	2001–2003
<u>Jennifer Pascual</u>	Director of Music	2003–present
Christopher Berry	Assistant Organist	2006–2007
Daniel Brondel	Assistant Organist Associate Director of Music and Organist	2007–2008 2008–present
Stephen Fraser	Assistant Organist	2008–2011
Stephen Rapp	Assistant Organist	2012–present
Michael Hey	Assistant Director of Music and Organist	2015–present

Burials and funeral masses

Located underneath the high altar is a crypt in which notable Catholic figures that served the Archdiocese are entombed. They include the nine past deceased Archbishops of New York:

- Archbishop John Joseph Hughes (interred 1883)
- John Cardinal McCloskey (interred 1885)
- Archbishop Michael Augustine Corrigan (interred 1902)
- John Murphy Cardinal Farley (interred 1918)
- Patrick Joseph Cardinal Hayes (interred 1938)
- Francis Joseph Cardinal Spellman (interred 1967)
- Terence James Cardinal Cooke (interred 1983)
- John Joseph Cardinal O'Connor (interred 2000)

- Edward Michael Cardinal Egan (interred 2015)

Other interments include:

- Michael J. Lavelle (Cathedral Rector, 1887-1939, and Vicar General; interred 1939)
- Joseph F. Flannelly (Auxiliary Bishop, 1948–1969; interred 1973)
- John Maguire (Coadjutor Archbishop, 1965–1980; interred 1989)
- Pierre Toussaint (interred 1990)

Pierre Toussaint and Cardinal Cooke were declared to be servants of God by Pope John Paul II, a step in process of being declared a saint of the Catholic Church. Toussaint was declared venerable in 1996 by Pope John Paul II.

Fulton J. Sheen, Auxiliary Bishop of New York, 1951–1965, and later Bishop of Rochester, was interred in the crypt from 1979 to 2019. The Archdiocese of New York lost a three-year court battle with his relatives to keep his remains there. On June 27, 2019, Sheen's remains were disinterred from St. Patrick's and transferred to St. Mary's Cathedral in Peoria, Illinois.^[35] Sheen had been raised in Peoria and he was ordained a priest there in 1919 for the Diocese of Peoria, which has sponsored his cause for canonization. He was declared venerable by Pope Benedict XVI on June 28, 2012.

Four of the Cardinals' *galeros* (those of Cardinals McCloskey, Farley, Hayes, and Spellman) are located high above the crypt at the back of the sanctuary. Cardinal Spellman's galero was also worn by Pope Pius XII (as Cardinal Eugenio Pacelli) until the latter's election to the papacy at the 1939 Papal conclave. In 1965, the ceremony of the consistory was revised by Pope Paul VI and therefore no galero was presented to Cardinal Cooke or any of his successors.

Some notable people whose Requiem Masses were said at the cathedral include New York Yankees greats Babe Ruth, Roger Maris, and Billy Martin; legendary football coach Vince Lombardi, New York City Police Department officer Steven McDonald, singer Celia Cruz, entertainer and host Ed Sullivan, actor and dancer George M. Cohan, former Attorney General and U.S. Senator from New York Robert F. Kennedy, New York Giants owner Wellington Mara, and former Governor of New York Hugh Carey. Special memorial Masses were also held at the cathedral following the deaths of artist Andy Warhol, baseball player Joe DiMaggio, and noted author William F. Buckley Jr.

Landmark designations

The cathedral and associated buildings were listed on the National Register of Historic Places and declared a National Historic Landmark in 1976.^{[5][36][37]} In addition, in 1966, the New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission designated the cathedral as a New York City Landmark.^[2]

See also

- List of Catholic cathedrals in the United States



The bas relief above the main entrance into St. Patrick's Cathedral on Fifth Avenue in 2016



St. Patrick's Cathedral map in 1916

- [List of cathedrals in the United States](#)
- [Roman Catholic Archdiocese of New York](#)

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External links

- [Official website \(http://www.saintpatrickscathedral.org\)](http://www.saintpatrickscathedral.org)
 - [Archdiocese of New York Official Site \(https://web.archive.org/web/20141213085419/http://www.archny.org/\)](https://web.archive.org/web/20141213085419/http://www.archny.org/)
 - [Virtual Tour of St. Patrick's Cathedral \(http://www.insidebusinessnyc.com/saint-patricks-cathedral-virtual-tour/\)](http://www.insidebusinessnyc.com/saint-patricks-cathedral-virtual-tour/)
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