

Self-Guided Tour of the Basilica

This tour takes you from the baptismal font near the main entrance, down the center aisle to the sanctuary, then right to the east apsidal chapels, back to the Lady Chapel, and then to the west-side chapels. The Basilica museum may be reached through the west transept.

- 1 Font, Ambry, Paschal Candle
- 2 Murdy Family Organ (2016)
- 3 Sanctuary Crossing
- 4 Seal of the Congregation of Holy Cross
- 5 Altar of Sacrifice
- 6 Ambo (Pulpit)
- 7 Original Altar /Tabernacle
- 8 East Transept and World War I Memorial Entrance
- 9 Tintinnabulum
- 10 Pietà
- 11 St. Brother André Chapel
- 12 Reliquary Chapel
- 13 The Lady Chapel (ceiling)
- 14 Our Lady of Guadalupe Chapel
- 15 Mural of The Death of Joseph
- 16 Blessed Basil Moreau Chapel
- 17 Ombrellino
- 18 Tomb of John Cardinal O'Hara, C.S.C.
- 19 Sacristy
- 20 Basilica Museum



The magnificent Paul Fritts and Company pipe organ, a gift of the Wayne and Diana Murdy family, was installed in 2016 and boasts 4 keyboards, 70 stops and 5,164 pipes. It stands 40 feet high and weighs more than 20 tons.



The gold ceiling marks the sanctuary of the Basilica, and depicts the four evangelists Matthew, Mark, Luke and John as well as various Old Testament prophets.



The seal of the Congregation of Holy Cross, carved into the marble at the front of the sanctuary, honors the spot where Holy Cross religious profess their perpetual vows and seminarians are ordained priests.



Following the Second Vatican Council, the altar shown here in front replaced the original, which still stands behind it and holds the reserved Blessed Sacrament (see no. 7 below).



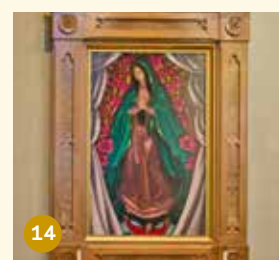
St. André Bessette, C.S.C. (1845-1937; canonized 2010), a Holy Cross brother, lived a simple and holy life and founded St. Joseph's Oratory, Montréal, Canada, out of his devotion to St. Joseph. Rev. Anthony Lauck, C.S.C., designed the statue of St. Bessette.



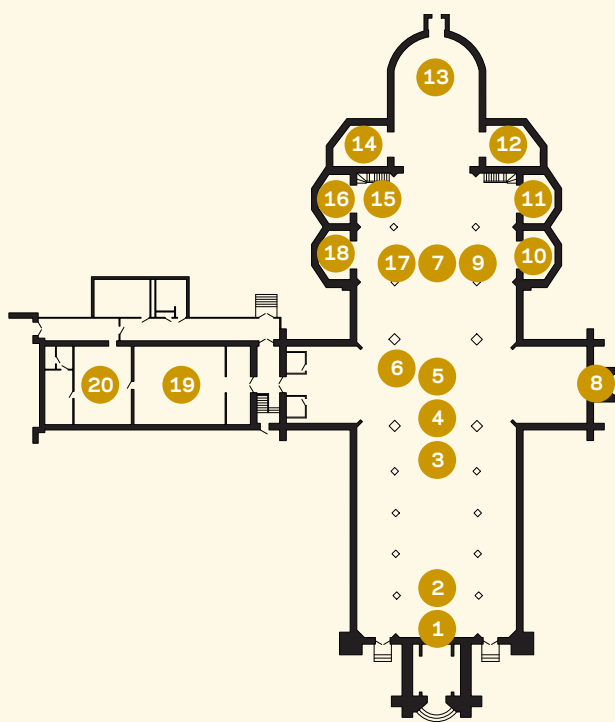
The Reliquary Chapel contains relics of most of the saints in the calendar of the Liturgical Year, including a relic of Blessed Basil Moreau, C.S.C. (pictured here), founder of the Congregation of Holy Cross.



The Lady Chapel is known historically as the Chapel of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross, the scene depicted in the ceiling painted by Luigi Gregori. The Lady Chapel was added to the Basilica in 1886 to help celebrate the 50th anniversary of Fr. Sorin's ordination in 1888.



The image of Our Lady of Guadalupe was painted by Maria Tomasula, the Michael P. Grace II Professor of Art, University of Notre Dame (2008). Our Lady of Guadalupe was declared Patroness of the Americas by Pope Pius XII (1946).



The original Gothic Revival altar, designed by Froc-Robert and Sons of Paris at the request of Fr. Sorin. The tabernacle tower, which holds the reserved Blessed Sacrament, was inspired by Revelation 21:9 ff, the vision of the new Jerusalem.



"The Death of Joseph," painted by Luigi Gregori, is one of 56 such Gregori murals in the Basilica.



The helmet of Rev. Charles O'Donnell, C.S.C., a chaplain in World War I and later president of Notre Dame, forms the light fixture in the east entrance, built in 1923 to memorialize Notre Dame students who died in that war.



Blessed Basil Moreau, C.S.C. (1799-1873; beatified 2007), was a priest and founder of the Congregation of Holy Cross. Fr. Moreau sent Fr. Sorin and the Holy Cross brothers here from France, but he himself was able to visit Notre Dame only once.



Among the special symbols in a church that designate a basilica are the ombrellino (also called a conopaeum) and the tintinnabulum (no. 9).



The original baptismal font, built in 1871, has been restored and moved to the entrance of the Basilica. The nearby ambry contains the three different oils used for particular sacramental moments in the Church's worship.



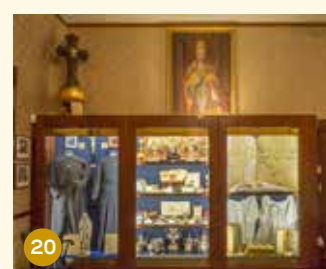
The Pope may give the designation "minor basilica" to certain churches because of their antiquity, dignity, historical importance, or significance as places of worship and devotion. They are typically honored with a tintinnabulum, pictured here, and an ombrellino (no. 17), as well as the Papal Coat of Arms, located over the outside main entrance. The tintinnabulum is adorned with the insignia of the Roman Pontiff and the coat of arms of the Basilica.



John Cardinal O'Hara, C.S.C. (1888-1960), buried here, was twelfth president of the University of Notre Dame (1934-1940), later Bishop of Buffalo and Cardinal Archbishop of Philadelphia.



The Pietà, depicting Mary holding her son, Jesus, in her arms after his death from crucifixion, was created by sculptor Ivan Mestrovic. Mestrovic's works can be found in other prominent places on campus, including outdoors and in two of the residence halls.



The Basilica's museum displays many artifacts from the history of the Congregation of Holy Cross and the University of Notre Dame. Many of the items contained here belonged to Fr. Edward Sorin, C.S.C., founder of the University.

The Bishop's Museum, located in the Basilica's basement, contains pontificalia of various American bishops, dating from the 19th century. Visits by appointment only.

Welcome to the
**Basilica of the
Sacred Heart**



Notre Dame, Indiana



On behalf the Congregation of Holy Cross, the founding religious order of the University of Notre Dame, I welcome you to the Basilica of the Sacred Heart. For more than 140 years this Basilica has served as the mother church of the Congregation of Holy Cross in the United States. It is here where Holy Cross religious profess final vows, where our seminarians are ordained priests, and where our deceased religious are commended to God. The Basilica is also a regular place of worship and prayer for students, faculty, staff, and alumni, as well as for pilgrims and countless visitors. This "splendid monument to God's glory" (Rev. Edward Sorin, C.S.C., founder of Notre Dame), situated together with the historic Main Building, signifies the twin values of faith and reason at the heart of the University of Notre Dame's mission. May your visit to the Basilica open your heart and mind to that same love of God that drove Fr. Sorin's vision for this place.

Sincerely yours in Notre Dame,
Rev. Peter D. Rocca, C.S.C.
Rector

Welcome

HISTORY



This is the church as seen in 1888.

Long before Rev. Edward Sorin, C.S.C., and seven Holy Cross Brothers arrived here from France in November 1842, missionaries had visited this area and established small communities here. In the late 1600s Jesuits named the enterprise Ste-Marie-des-Lacs, the first Catholic mission to serve the local Potawatomi tribe along with French trappers and settlers in the area. Though the British expelled Catholic missionaries from the area following the French and Indian War, in 1832 Ste-Marie-des-Lacs was re-established, and ten years later, Fr. Sorin and the brothers assumed pastoral responsibility for this area and renamed the mission Notre Dame du Lac. He replaced the 1832 chapel with a much larger one, which served the community until 1848 when the "Old Church" of the Sacred Heart was erected. In 1870, construction on the present Basilica was begun, and the cornerstone was blessed in 1871. Built in the Gothic Revival style, the Basilica is in the form of a Latin cross, 275 feet long and 114 feet wide.

(Continued)

The first Mass was celebrated here in 1875. In addition to its sanctuary and seven apsidal (semi-circular and recessed) chapels, the Basilica has forty-four large stained glass windows, including 114 life-sized pictures of saints, and 106 smaller scenes, produced in the 1870s and 1880s in Le Mans, France. Luigi Gregori, artist of the Papal Household of Blessed Pius IX and professor of art at Notre Dame, painted the fifty-six murals and Stations of the Cross during the 1870s. Members of Gregori's family as well as faculty and students served as models for many of the scenes; Holy Cross priests and brothers who then lived on campus likewise served as models for the figures of the Stations. The 218-foot-tall bell tower, completed in 1892, contains a bass bell, or boudon, weighing some six tons, as well as possibly the oldest carillon in North America, consisting of twenty-three bells with a compass of two and one half octaves. In 1968, the church sanctuary was renovated according to the liturgical reforms mandated by the Second Vatican Council. From 1988 through 1991, the Conrad Schmitt Studios of New Berlin, Wisconsin, thoroughly restored the church, and on January 17, 1992, Saint John Paul II designated it a minor basilica.



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