

The Renovation of the Church of St. Francis Xavier

September 2009

Dear parishioners and visitors to the Church of St. Francis Xavier:

As people enter this venerable and beautiful Church of Saint Francis Xavier tucked away on West 16th Street, they are always awestruck. Perhaps you have had or are now having that same experience of awe. “Wow, what a gorgeous church.” “It is like a church you might find in Europe.”

This Guide to our church will certainly help you to appreciate this magnificent church even more. As you walk around the church noticing all the various statues, paintings, windows and other stunning features, we trust that this Guide will help you to answer the many questions that will surely come to mind.

We are sure that this Guide, lovingly prepared by Chere Krist to whom we owe a debt of gratitude, will also help you to further appreciate just what a religious and architectural treasure St. Francis Xavier Church truly is. Its beauty helps us to raise our mind and hearts to God.

It is no secret, however, that our church interior is in desperate need of serious restoration. I am happy to report that we have already completed all the exterior restoration to the church building. We now have a new roof, our portico has been refurbished, and the building pointed. But, of course, continued restoration needs to come from interested and concerned donors. Without your support we will not be able to complete the project that has already begun over the past few years.

If you are interested in donating specifically to the church’s restoration, simply leave your gift with our receptionist or mail it to us at 55 West 15th Street, New York, NY 10011. Be sure to mark the envelope “St. Francis Xavier – Capital Campaign” If you would like to make a major gift, please feel free to contact me directly.

Finally, if you are looking for a parish in which to belong, we hope that you will consider worshipping here with us. All are Welcome!

Rev. Joseph S. Costantino, S.J.
Pastor

Moving Forward in
RENEWAL, RENOVATION AND RESTORATION

At the turn of the new century, the renovation of the Church of St. Francis Xavier began. Phase I consisted of the replacement of a very leaky roof and many other desperately needed outside repairs. Phase II is the restoration of the interior to its beautiful, original look. Keep in mind that this is a “restoration” not a “remodeling.” The altar area is being rearranged to facilitate safety, usage, and accessibility. The church will be air-conditioned in the summers with the mechanics hidden behind the old organ screen. If the church appears different to you in color or writing, it is as close as possible to the way it would have been seen over a hundred years ago.

The many years have taken their toll. Dirt, smoke, incense and just plain age have changed colors and even obscured items. Some earlier repairs have hidden items no one knew about. Color is the biggest change. The dirty grey is being returned to a soft buff with cream outlines. Faded stenciling that was seldom seen is being restored. The writing over the Stations of the Cross has been reduced to Roman numerals. Present memories remember the change from Latin writing to an English translation but the numerals were original. This was for a very simple reason -- the average person could not read.

Teams of workers have made what you see possible. The conservators work at conserving artwork such as the Stations of the Cross, the ceiling medallions, and the transept murals. Our church has a lot of artwork, with much of it quite a bit off the floor! The stained glass team has to carefully remove, clean, repair and reinstall all the glasswork. This is a great deal more than just using a little glass cleaner. The windows need to be re-leaded and the protective glass is being updated from glass-and-wire to tempered glass, allowing much more light through. The stone workers are cleaning what can be cleaned and replacing broken/missing pieces with matching stone. It was awesome to watch the power washers remove paint and grit to reveal beautiful stonework. The woodworkers are cleaning and repairing the woodwork of the church to its original oak -- the workman’s wood. The trim, confessionals and the stairs to the upper level can be seen. The pews are off-site being stripped and refinished in their natural oak. They will not be new pews but our beautiful old ones restored. The scaffolding team made all this possible in a safe environment. For example: the medallions could not be brought down so the workers had to be up to them.

*Peace and comfort bring rest to the weary
while sitting in this beautiful church.
As light shines down from the stained glass above,
God’s voice is a whisper to the soul.*

GUIDE TO OUR CHURCH

INCLUDES A THUMBNAIL REVISION OF
THE CHURCH OF ST. FRANCIS XAVIER 1882-1982
COMMEMORATING OUR CHURCH'S 100TH ANNIVERSARY

Welcome to the Church of St. Francis Xavier. Many people come to our church for prayer and guidance. Some come just to take in its peace and beauty. This guide is designed to give parishioners and visitors alike a short history and to help them locate and identify the various parts that combine to make this such a beautiful place of worship.

The history of our parish begins with a very determined priest. Rev. John Larkin, S.J., left St. John's College at Fordham in the summer of 1847 with only fifty cents in his pocket. He was given the task of establishing a parish and school in New York City. Travel costs of forty-five cents left him with only a nickel to accomplish his goal.

While praying for guidance in the French Church on Broadway and Canal Street, Fr. Larkin met a newly-arrived Frenchman praying his thanks for a safe ocean crossing. He also wanted to invest the exact amount of money Fr. Larkin needed to make a down payment on a church. This first church was dedicated in October 1847. Unfortunately, it burned to the ground the following January. Using borrowed space and then a second church, the parish was kept alive. The parish soon outgrew its second home and plans were made for the construction of a beautiful, new building.

The cornerstone of our church was laid on Sunday, May 5, 1878. Described as "Roman Basilica" in style, the architecture is "Classical Roman" containing liberal Ancient Grecian and Renaissance modifications. The architect was Patrick Keely. The murals were painted by William Lamprecht. Time led us to believe that these were frescoes, but this was proven false when restoration started. A fresco is painted directly into the wet plaster where a mural is painted on top of dry plaster. Regardless, the murals by Mr. Lamprecht are beautiful.

Supplies for the construction came from several sources. The polished columns and lighter colored cornices came from New Hampshire. The blue-mottled and snowflake granite came from Massachusetts. The interior arches are supported by pilasters veneered with Italian marble. The high altar is constructed of blue-veined Italian marble, dotted with Mexican onyx and with moldings and cornices of white statuary marble. The tabernacle is white marble. The side altars are of white statuary marble. The aisles are terrazzo flanked by wooden floors supporting carved oak pews.

Amazingly enough, the price for this construction was less than \$600,000! Some of

the costs were broken down to the following: masonry work - \$114,462; plasterers - \$26,398; carpentry - \$35,270; lumber - \$15,872; marble work - \$23,786; two pipe organs - \$26,290; the roof - \$4,006; the architect - \$3,170; the murals - \$14,325; and the property - \$189,550. All to build the beautiful church you see today. Not much could be done with these sums now. The recent repair of the roof alone cost more than three times what it cost to build the whole church.

Little has been done to the building prior to the current renovation campaign. It was cleaned and underwent a minor facelift for the 1926 Diamond Jubilee of the original founding of the School and Church of St. Francis Xavier. Because of changes in the population of the parish, the Lower Church was no longer needed and was closed in 1954. It was converted into a bingo center and renamed Larkin Hall. Later, its use was expanded into a hall/cafe for the school. It was renamed again in 2006 as Hurtado Hall. The realignment of the altar took place in 1976 in the spirit of Vatican II.

The second level of the Upper Church is not in use today. It consists of balconies, choir loft, and organ area. The original organ was from Hook and Hastings of Boston. A truly beautiful instrument, it boasted 80 ranks and 4,390 pipes. It was replaced in 1957 with a Kilgen organ, but the original pipes remain in the carved oak case. The organ was in use as late as the early 1980's. Music is now provided by a grand piano and other instruments located near the altar.

Last, but not least, are the stained glass windows. Although not pictorial, the windows boast of soft shades of blue, green, lavender, red, and gold. They vary in size from the five part half-moons found over the Stations of the Cross to the combination of windows that fill in the grand arches of the transepts. These windows bathe the pews in colored sunlight.

May this GUIDE, in some way, help you find what you are looking for.

***For location of all objects and places,
please refer to map on center pages.***

A. The Altars

1. THE HIGH ALTAR – Weighing in at an amazing 24 tons, the High Altar (or Reredos) is a focal point in the sanctuary. Constructed of Italian marble with onyx inlay, it stands majestically in the front of the church. THE BAPTISMAL FONT is being relocated to in front of the High Altar. Also being moved into this area is the brass and glass case, called

an AMBRY (a repository or receptacle for sacred vessels,) that holds the holy oils used in the sacraments,

2. ALTAR and AMBO are parts of a matched set. When altars were realigned with Vatican II, this new altar was added. In this way, the priest could face the congregation, leaving the High Altar intact. The ambo is a lectern.

B. Surrounding the High Altar

On the ceiling above the High Altar, the symbol of the **Holy Spirit** is in the shape of a dove. The statues, found high on the walls of the nave, represent the most holy of persons in the Catholic faith and the founders of the Society of Jesus.

3. THE SACRED HEART OF JESUS, the center statue
4. THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY
5. ST. JOSEPH
6. ST. FRANCIS XAVIER raises the cross while preaching to the people of the Indies.
7. ST. IGNATIUS LOYOLA holds the Constitution of the Society of Jesus which he founded in 1534.

Immediately below these statues are five murals painted by William Lamprecht, depicting (from left to right) the five principle events in the life of Jesus: THE ANNUNCIATION OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY, THE NATIVITY, THE CRUCIFIXION, THE RESURRECTION, and THE ASCENSION.

On the lower level around the High Altar, are (from left to right) mural portraits of five typical missionary saints of the Society of Jesus:

ST. PETER CLAVER, the apostle of the Blacks, died a martyr of charity.
ST. FRANCIS JEROME, the evangelizer of cities, was known for his sweetness and patience.
ST. FRANCIS BORGIA, the zealous organizer of foreign missions, was remarkable for his intense devotion to the real sacramental presence of Jesus upon earth.
ST. FRANCIS REGIS, uncomplaining victim of calumny (slander or lies), was the missionary of peasants and the meek.
ST. PETER CANISIUS, the reclamer of Protestants and schismatics, was named the “Apostle of Germany.”

C. Prophets of the Old Testament

Around the Altar of Sacrifice, the pillars are tripled. The four great prophets of the Old Testament are carved directly into the area above the cornices of these great pillars:

8. ISAAH is indicated by a saw for his painful manner of death and by a burning coal (Is. 6:6) and the tree of Jesse (Is. 11:1).
9. JEREMIAH is characterized stroking his beard and weeping his laments over Jerusalem.
10. EZEKIEL carries the sword of martyrdom and the scroll of the Word of God which he is bidden to eat (Ez. 2:8) – also depicted are the city gate (Ez. 44:2) and the pair of scales, or balance (Ez. 5).
11. DANIEL is recognized by the lions, the three children in the furnace and the basket of bread miraculously brought to him when he was imprisoned in the lion’s den.

D. The Statuary Around the Church

12. ST. PETER holds the keys by which the Lord entrusted to him leadership to the Church.
13. ST. PAUL grasps the sword of martyrdom.

The other apostles follow around the east and west transepts. The four evangelists flank the two large windows and hold the symbols of their Gospels (derived from a vision reported in Ez. 1:10.)

14. ST. JAMES THE GREAT, the Apostle of Spain, walks with a staff in his hand.
15. ST. JOHN holds in his hands the poisoned chalice from which he drank unhurt.
16. ST. PHILLIP is with the cross that marked his crucifixion.
17. ST. MATTHEW is attended by an angel in human form.
18. ST. MARK is with a lion crouching at his feet. (Mark writes in his Gospel, “as it were, a lion’s voice roaring in the desert”)
19. ST. SIMON leans on the saw, one of the instruments of his torture.
20. ST. THOMAS, the patron of architects, is seen with a carpenter’s rule, a tradition originating in one of the miraculous events of his apostolate in India.
21. ST. JAMES THE LESS wields an author’s pen, as a New Testament writer.
22. ST. BARTHOLOMEW holds a knife, as he was flayed alive.
23. ST. MATTHEW (again) points to the open pages of his Gospel.
24. ST. JOHN is designated by an eagle. (In his Gospel, “soaring high like an eagle, teaches us the sublime truth of the eternal godhead, of the Word made flesh”)
25. ST. LUKE is designated by an ox. (His Gospel insists on the priestly {sacrificial} character of Christ)

26. ST. JUDE grasps a club, since he was beaten to death for his faith.
27. ST. ANDREW rests his hand upon his X-shaped cross.

Then follow, on alternating sides, down the Church:

28. ST. AUGUSTINE, ancient doctor of the Church
29. ST. THOMAS AQUINAS, modern doctor of the Church
30. ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST
31. ST. MICHAEL, THE ARCHANGEL
32. ST. PATRICK, vested as a bishop
33. ST. BRIDGET, as an abbess with crosier
34. ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI
35. ST. DOMINIC
36. ST. THERESA OF LISIEUX, in the dress of a Carmelite
37. ST. ROSE OF LIMA, with the Divine Infant in her arms
38. ST. VINCENT de PAUL, founder of the Congregation of the Mission (Vincentians or Lazarists) and the Sisters of Charity, sheltering an orphan child
39. ST. ALPHONSUS, founder of the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer
40. ST. CATHERINE OF SIENA, with a lily, a cross, and a crown of thorns
41. ST. CECILIA, with her organ, as she is the patroness of church music

E. CHAPELS, ALTARS, Statues, Artwork, Paintings and Points of Prayer

Please note that as the restoration progresses, some altars and statues will be moved. No statues are being removed.

42. **THE MARY CHAPEL** – Reminiscent of an old mission chapel, the sponge-painted walls of the Mary Chapel bring a warmth and closeness. Once the sacristy, it was remodeled and converted into a chapel when the Lower Church was closed. This is where weekday masses are usually held. The original Mary Chapel's altar was made from the pews that were removed from the sanctuary during remodeling. Upon entering, the eyes are drawn to the beautiful stained glass windows and a full length painting. The window on the left is THE ANNUNCIATION, a gift from the Young Ladies' Sodality. The window on the right is THE ASSUMPTION, a gift from the Women's Sodality. Also capturing the eye is the painting of Mary rising to heaven on a cloud borne by angels. This canvas was painted and donated by James Hoff.
43. **OUR LADY CHAPEL** – Containing the marble statue of the Blessed Virgin Mary holding the Infant Jesus in her arms. Stanford White, the famous architect, frequently visited the chapel and claimed if he got to heaven it would be because of this beautiful lady. Our Lady Chapel holds the tabernacle. Murals to the left and right of the altar illustrate

THE VISITATION and THE PRESENTATION IN THE TEMPLE. This chapel also contains the first of two Tiffany windows. Here, the Madonna and Child are shown with St. Clare and St. Francis of Assisi kneeling before Them.

44. ST. FRANCIS XAVIER – *This statue is being moved but its exact location is not determined as of yet.* Another statue of St. Francis Xavier stands in front of, and slightly to the side of, the old marble pulpit. Our church is dedicated to the honor of St. Francis Xavier. A nobleman by birth, he was a missionary and teacher. In 1534, he co-founded the Society of Jesus (Jesuit Order) with St. Ignatius of Loyola, Peter Faber, James Laynez, Alphonsus Salmeron, Simon Rodriguez and Nicholas Bobadilla. His mission work took him to India, Indonesia, and Japan; he died before reaching China, however.
45. RELIC –the Relic of St. Francis Xavier is imbedded in the altar rail that is being incorporated into the rail for the handicapped access. *Its exact location has not been determined as of yet.*
46. The **ST. JOSEPH CHAPEL** contains the statue of St. Joseph, the patron saint of the family and working man. The chapel has murals of, to the left, the Holy Family in the workshop in Nazareth and, to the right, the death of St. Joseph. Considered a just and faithful man, it was to Joseph the God entrusted His greatest treasures -- namely His divine Son and Mary, Joseph's wife. Joseph fulfilled his vocation with complete fidelity until God called him home saying, "Good and faithful servant, enter into the joy of our Lord." This chapel also contains the second Tiffany window depicting the Madonna and Child wearing classic royal vestments and golden crowns.
47. **THE SHRINE OF THE NORTH AMERICAN MARTYRS** – St. Isaac and Companions – This includes SS. Gabriel Lalemant, Rene Goupil, Charles Garnier, John de Brebeuf, Noel Chabanel, Isaac Jogues, Anthony Daniel and John de la Lande. Instead of statues, the back of this altar is a series of broken-tile mosaics. The central and side panels show the missionaries at prayer in the early Americas. Medallion portraits in the same tile work are above these larger works to complete the set of eight. **THE CRUCIFIX** stands above these saints as they pray to Jesus for guidance. These missionaries to Canada and North America in the mid-1600's worked primarily with the Huron Indians. This is when John de Brebeuf wrote the French-Huron dictionary that was used for many years. However, these "Blackrobes" were blamed by the locals for all disease, ill luck and other problems that occurred. They were captured by the Iroquois who tortured and killed them.
48. **THE ALTAR OF THE BOY SAINTS/ALTAR OF HOPE AND REMEMBRANCE** – Resting in an alcove at the end of the western transept, this is two altars in one. **THE ALTAR OF THE BOY SAINTS** contains the statues of SS. ALOYSIUS GONZAGA, STANISLAUS KOSTA AND JOHN BERCHMANS. It is flanked on the left by a mural depicting St. Stanislaus in the garb of a pilgrim

receiving the Holy Eucharist from angelic hands, and on the right by the Guardian Angel leading a child up a hill to heaven. These murals were not painted by William Lamprecht. The difference in style and quality are clear. **THE ALTAR OF HOPE AND REMEMBRANCE** is composed of a picture, “MOTHER OF GOD, LIGHT IN ALL DARKNESS,” and a book of prayer. These are displayed on the Altar of the Boy Saints and are dedicated to all people living with or having died from HIV and AIDS. The book is available for any who wish to write down their thoughts and prayers. A trio of stained glass windows above the altar joins to form the ceiling of the alcove and bathes the altar in muted light.

49. **THE PATRONS OF YOUTH** is a mural on the southern wall of the second level of the western transept. It depicts the Infant Jesus standing in His mother’s lap while greeting the three young scholastics universally venerated as the patrons of youth: SS. ALOYSIUS GONZAGA, STANISLAUS KOSTA and JOHN BERCHMANS.
50. **THE JAPANESE MARTYRS** is a mural on the northern wall of the second level of the western transept. It depicts three Jesuits (Paul Michi, John Grotto, and James Kisai) who were among twenty-six people crucified for their faith in 1597 in a country that fifty years earlier had not one Christian.
51. **THE ALTAR OF THE SACRED HEART** – Resting in the alcove at the end of the eastern transept is the Altar of the Sacred Heart. It contains a classic statue of Jesus displaying His Sacred Heart. As in the Altar of the Boy Saints, a trio of stained glass windows in the top of the alcove allows light to shine down on the altar. The alcove is adorned by two murals: on the left, illustrating our Divine Lord appearing to St. Margaret Mary on the eve of her profession in the Order of the Visitation and, on the right, the most famous of many apparitions of the Lord to Margaret Mary when he instructed her on the value of devotion to His Most Sacred Heart.
52. **THE PIETA** is one of the most recognizable religious statues. The most famous was sculpted by Michelangelo. It depicts the body of Jesus in the arms of His Blessed Mother Mary after the crucifixion. The kneeler for this altar contains the prayer: “I am the Resurrection and the Life; if you believe in me, though you die, yet shall you live, and whoever lives and believes in me shall never die.” (John 11:25)
53. **THE FIRST VOWS** is a mural on the northern wall of the second level of the eastern transept. It depicts the first vows of Jesuits: Ignatius Loyola, Peter Faber, Francis Xavier, James Laynez, Alphonsus Salmeron, Simon Rodriguez and Nicholas Bobadilla taken in August 1534.
54. **THE DEATH OF ST. FRANCIS XAVIER** is a mural on the southern wall of the second level of the eastern transept.

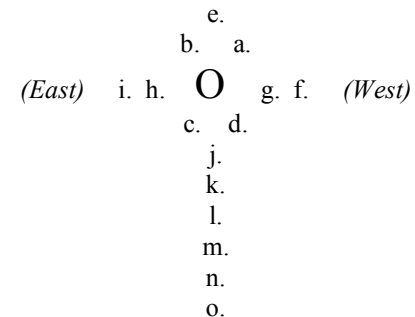
F. **The Ceiling** is adorned by a large central medallion at the intersection of the nave

and the transepts. It depicts St. Francis Xavier, clothed in priestly vesture, borne heavenward by angels. (**The Apotheosis of St. Francis**) The four lesser medallions include angels carrying scrolls representing his virtues:

- a. A green palm of victory for “Xavier, Apostle of the Indies”
- b. A lily of chastity for “Xavier, Virgin in Soul and Body”
- c. A cross and chalice for “Defender of the Faith”
- d. A mirror in hand for “Mirror of True Piety”

The whole ceiling of the Church is then similarly treated, with scroll-bearing angels invoking virtues: (*see layout below*)

- e. Xavier, Destroyer of Idols
- f. Xavier, Terror of Devils
- g. Xavier, Helper in Famine, Pestilence and War
- h. Xavier, Whose Power the Sea and Tempests Obey
- i. Xavier, Life of the Dead
- j. Xavier, Most Obedient
- k. Xavier, Most Chaste
- l. Xavier, Most Poor
- m. Xavier, Overflowing Vessel of Divine Love
- n. Xavier, Worker of Miracles
- o. Xavier, Guide in the Faith of Virtue and Perfection



G. THE STATIONS OF THE CROSS

The fresco Stations of the Cross are masterpieces by William Lamprecht. Although darkened by age and grime, they still wonderfully illustrate these strongly religious moments. Starting near the Altar of the Sacred Heart, they continue counter-clockwise around the sanctuary.

- I Pilate condemns Jesus XIV Jesus is placed in the tomb

II Jesus takes His cross (turn corner)	XIII Jesus is taken from the cross (turn corner)
III Jesus falls to the ground	XII Jesus dies upon the cross
IV Jesus meets His mother	XI Jesus is nailed to the cross
V Simon helps Jesus	X They tear off His garments
VI Veronica wipes His face	IX Jesus falls the third time
VII Jesus falls again (cross entrance)	VIII Jesus speaks to the women

H. CONFESSIONALS

The confessionals appeared to be a very dark wood but, in reality, they were the same oak found throughout the church. Three of the confessionals were being for storage while the fourth remained in use.

55. CONFSSIONAL/ALTARS – Of the four confessionals in the sanctuary, three have been restored to the original oak and renovated to house the following saints – *the order and/or grouping of which has not been determined.*

The **INFANT OF PRAGUE** is an icon depicting the Holy Child. The original statue is kept in the Carmelite monastery in Prague, the Czech Republic. Brought to Bohemia by a Spanish princess, the statue was given to the Discalced Carmelites. It was thrown away when the monastery was plundered after the Thirty Years War in 1631. Found again in 1637, the statue now remains in Prague. Traditionally, the Infant is dressed in royal garb holding the orb in His left hand and a small bird in His right.

OUR LADY OF FATIMA – In a pale-to-white gown and rising from a cloud, Our Lady of Fatima is easily recognizable. This painted statue rests on a marble altar nearly identical to that of St. Anthony of Padua. Also known as “Our Lady of the Rosary of Fatima”, the Blessed Virgin Mary appeared to three shepherd children on the 13th day of six consecutive months in 1917 at Fatima, Portugal.

OUR LADY OF GUADALUPE is also called the “Empress of the Americas.” In 1531, Juan Diego saw a vision of the Blessed Virgin Mary at the Hill of Tepeyac in Mexico. The bishop would not believe him and asked for a miraculous sign. Diego was told by the Virgin to gather flowers from the hill even though it was winter. He found the hill covered in Spanish roses. Gathering the blooms in his cloak, he presented them to the bishop. An icon of the Virgin remained imprinted in his robe. She is always shown in flowing robes with radiant beams spreading from her. Held dear to the faithful of Mexico, Our Lady of Guadalupe is called by the familiar “Lupita.”

The **VIRGIN OF SUYAPA** is a 2.3-inch statue of the Blessed Virgin Mary. Many Hondurans believe the original statue was miraculously

found by a boy while sleeping outdoors. After he had rolled onto it in his sleep, he threw it as far away from him as he could. It was under him again when he awoke in the morning. The boy’s family kept the statue in their home for many years until a chapel was built to house it. She was declared a saint, Our Lady of Suyapa, Patron Saint of Honduras, by Pope Pius XII. The statue is kept in Suyapa, a suburb of Tegucigalpa (capital of Honduras) but tours the country each year in February. She is considered to have miraculous powers and a calming effect.

ST. ANTHONY OF PADUA was known as the Evangelical Doctor. A renowned teacher and speaker, St. Anthony was a poor Franciscan priest who landed in Sicily after a shipwreck. Legend says he was such a good speaker that even the fish loved to listen. He was proclaimed a Doctor of the Church in 1946. St. Anthony is one of the most famous saints: the patron of the poor and of all who seek lost articles. Our statue is realistically painted and stands atop a light brown/rose marble altar with mosaic inlays. He is generally shown with lilies and the Infant Jesus in his arms.

ST. JUDE is Jude Thaddeus. He was a cousin of Jesus. Beaten to death and then beheaded, St. Jude is often shown with a flame above his head. He usually carries a pen as he was a writer of canonical letters. He is the patron of hopeless and desperate situations, forgotten causes, and hospitals.

ST. MARTIN de PORRES was born the illegitimate son of a Spanish nobleman and a young freed slave, possibly Afro-Peruvian. While he was a boy, he was taken in by the Dominican brothers as a servant. Later, he was placed in charge of the infirmary in Lima. Martin de Porres was known for his tender care and spectacular cures. The Dominicans did not allow Blacks to join the order, but they changed their policy. He became the first Black who crossed racial barriers in 16th Century Peru, and is the first Black saint from the Americas.

56. CONFSSIONAL (in use) – The fourth confessional has also been restored to the original oak and remains remodeled to gain access to a small room. Here the penitent can either use a screened kneeler or sit face-to-face with the priest.

I. Physical Layout

This includes all other points as well as facilities within the church.

57. HOLY WATER FONTS are located on the wall to either side of the main entrance to the sanctuary.
58. Restroom – To find the restroom, go through the large door near the Our Lady Chapel. Go up a short flight of stairs and the door is on the right. Access to the restroom will change when the handicapped access is complete.
59. Church Office – From the street, the office is at 55 West 15th Street

(Look for the red awning). Stairs and elevator give access to the second floor for the office. From the sanctuary, the office is behind and to the west of the altar.

60. Handicapped Access – The elevator is accessible through the church Office. A ramp is in place through the St. Joseph Chapel to allow access to the sanctuary. *This access is being greatly redesigned to make it safer and easier to use.*
61. Shield – A tile mosaic is set into the terrazzo floor at the beginning of the center aisle. This shield is also used as the crest for the high school.
62. Above the DOORS TO THE INTERIOR is a phrase that continues from the eastern door (62a) to the western door (62b) saying ...
(62a) *DOMUS MEA* (62b) *DOMUS ORATIONES*
My House is a House of Prayer

J. Exit/Entrance

The following inscription can be found above the inside of the main doors to the church:

NON EST HIC ALIUD NISI DOMUS DEI ET PORTA COELI
Nothing else is here except the house of God and the gate of heaven

K. Placed within the cornerstone

Along with other historical artifacts, is a parchment with the following inscription (see next page):

TO THE MOST BENEFICENT AND MOST HIGH GOD,
WHEN TO THE HONOR OF FRANCIS XAVIER, APOSTLE AND SAVIOR OF THE EAST
WAS TO BE REARED AN AMPLER TEMPLE
AT THE SOLEMN CEREMONIES
WHEREAT PATRICK N. LYNCH, RIGHT REVEREND BISHOP OF CHARLESTON
SPOKE TO THE PEOPLE THE WORD OF GOD,
JOHN M'CLOSKEY,
CARDINAL OF THE HOLY ROMAN CHURCH.
ARCHBISHOP OF NEW YORK,
ASSENTING AND APPROVING,
WILLIAM QUINN,
OF THE SAME DIOCESE ADMINISTRATOR,
LAID THE SACRED CORNER-STONE,
ON THE THIRD DAY BEFORE THE NONES OF MAY, IN THE YEAR
MDCCCLXXVIII,
IN THE PONTIFICATE OF LEO XIII,
WHEN RUTHERFORD B. HAYES
WAS CHIEF MAGISTRATE OF THE UNITED STATES OF NORTH AMERICA,
LUCIUS ROBINSON

GOVERNOR OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF NEW YORK,
SMITH ELY JUNIOR
MAYOR OF THE CITY.
AS THE BUILDING WHICH HAD BEEN FOR XXVII YEARS, VII MONTHS AND X DAYS
DEDICATED TO THE HONOR OF ST. FRANCIS XAVIER
WAS UNEQUAL TO THE THROG OF WORSHIPPERS,
THE FATHERS OF THE SOCIETY OF JESUS,
WITH THE APPROVAL OF PETER BECKX,
SUPERIOR-GENERAL OF THE ORDER, RESOLVED TO ERECT A TEMPLE
IN STRUCTURE MORE SPACIOUS, IN ORNAMENTATION MORE ELABORATE
AND HAVING BY THE COUNSEL AND AT THE BEHEST OF THEOPHILUS CHARAUX,
SUPERIOR OF THE ORDER IN NEW YORK AND CANADA,
PURCHASED TO THE NUMBER OF SEVEN THE DWELLING HOUSES ADJOINING,
RAZED FOUR TO THE FOUNDATIONS AND PARTIALLY DESTROYED THE
REMAINING THREE. NOR WAS THE COLLEGE LEFT INTACT,
BUT THAT FOR THE CONSTRUCTING OF THE EDIFICE THERE MIGHT BE
AN AREA IN WIDTH LXXIII, IN DEPTH CLXXXVI FEET,
A PORTION OF IT WAS DEMOLISHED.
THE ERECTION, FURTHERMORE, AND EMBELLISHMENT OF THE TEMPLE THUS
INAUGURATED
WAS FROM THE FIRST ENTRUSTED TO PATRICK C. KEELY, ARCHITECT.
TO MEET THE VAST EXPENSE OF THE UNDERTAKING
THE PIETY OF THE FAITHFUL
WAS TO COME TO THE AID OF THE FATHERS OF THE SOCIETY OF JESUS
BY ALMS AND CHARITABLE DONATIONS.
HENRY HUDSON, RECTOR OF THE COLLEGE, OF WHICH THE AIM IS THE
TRAINING OF YOUTH IN RELIGION AND THE ARTS,
AND LIKEWISE, DAVID MERRICK, PASTOR OF THE CHURCH,
WERE BY THEIR SKILLFUL DIRECTION AND UNTIRING ZEAL TO FURTHER
THE ARDUOUS ENTERPRISE.
**HAIL XAVIER, COMRADE!
IF TO THEE WE REAR ALOFT
A GRANDER TEMPLE,
DO THOU,
WITH TENDERER WATCH AND WARD,
COLLEGE, PASTORS AND FLOCK
ASSIST, CHERISH, AND
FOSTER.**

Our Parish Mission Statement

We, the Church of St. Francis Xavier,
are a prophetic Roman Catholic community
where Jesus Christ is recognized
as Companion in our journey
and made present
through our celebration of the sacraments,
our proclamation and echoing of the gospel,
and our loving outreach and service,
especially to those in most need.
While acknowledging our incompleteness

and need for God's grace,
we affirm the equality of God's people
that flows from baptism
and we commit ourselves to the spirit of
inclusion and collaboration.
We are called to respond to God in our time by
being a community
where seekers and their questions are welcomed,
where injustice in all its forms is challenged,
where the alienated
and the marginalized find a home,
and where people are refreshed, reconciled,
and renewed
in their journey to God.
Standing together as a people of hope,
we seek to realize the Reign of God.

*Adopted by the Community at Prayer
The Feast of Christ the King, 1998*

Information sources: *The Church of St. Francis Xavier (1882-1982); A Memorial of St. Francis Xavier; The Penguin Dictionary of Saints; Catholic-forum.com/SAINTS;*
and the help of many parishioners.