

A History of St. Anthony of Padua Church

New Bedford, Massachusetts

By

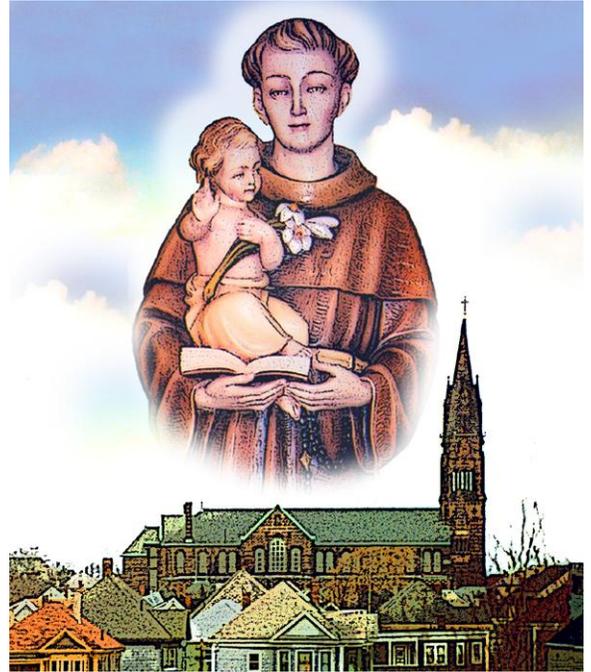
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INTRODUCTION

LIFE OF ST. ANTHONY of PADUA (1195-1231)

A Portuguese saint, Anthony was born in Lisbon in 1195 (though carbon-dating performed on his bones in 1982 suggest a different birth year). His father was a Captain in the Portuguese Royal Army. Anthony joined the Franciscan Order in 1221 and was asked by St. Francis to instruct the Order in the study of the scriptures. Anthony died in 1231. Pope Gregory IX enrolled him among the saints in 1232. At Padua, a magnificent basilica was built in his honor; his holy relics were entombed there in 1263. From the time of his death up to the present day, countless miracles have occurred through St. Anthony's intercession, so that he is known as the Wonder-Worker. On January 16, 1946, Pope Pius XII, declared St. Anthony a Doctor of the Church, with the title, *Doctor Evangelicus*, Doctor of Gospels. Within the entire Community of Saints, only 33 have been declared Doctors of the Church for their exemplary scholasticism and their Christ-like lives. Anthony is typically depicted holding a book of the Gospels and cradling the Christ Child. Anthony died in Italy, but is still very much a Portuguese saint. He is patron saint of Lisbon and of preachers of the gospels. His intercession is often sought as the saint of lost causes and lost articles. Founded in 1895, the parish of St. Anthony of Padua, located in New Bedford, Massachusetts, was so named because 1895 was the 700th anniversary of the birth of this remarkable saint.



PREFACE: Chronology of the Establishment of Catholicism in Southeastern Massachusetts

- 1820 - St. Mary's, First Catholic Church in SE Mass est. in New Bedford by Fr. Philip Larissey.
- 1837 - First Catholic church in Fall River – St. John's.
- 1840 - Train Service (New Bedford to Boston) established; Many French & Irish begin arriving.
- 1844 - Hartford Diocese set off from Boston.
- 1847 - New Bedford is incorporated as a city; Hartford Diocese makes New Bedford a mission of Fall River.
- 1855 - St. Mary's Church is dedicated in Fall River.
- 1872 - Providence Diocese is set off from Hartford.
- 1904 - Fall River Diocese is set off from Providence on March 12, 1904.
- 1905 - Exterior of the St. Anthony of Padua Church is completed.
- 1906 – St. Anthony's Bronze Cross is erected atop the spire on New Year's Day.
- 1908 - Basement was finished; 1st Mass said there by Bishop Feehan on July 4th.
- 1909 - 2000 families form the parish of St. Anthony of Padua.
- 1912 - St. Anthony of Padua Church is dedicated on Thanksgiving Day (Nov. 28th).

ST. ANTHONY of PADUA PARISH

1895 – Est. on the 700th Anniversary of the birth of Saint Anthony of Padua.

Father Hormisdas Deslauriers (1861-1916)

St. Anthony's first pastor, Father Deslauriers, was the visionary pastor who saw the grand church for the parish. He was the fountainhead of the effort throughout the entire project and continued as the inspirational leader of the parish and the community. The chronology of the founding of the Fall River Diocese (above) illustrates that there was hope in 1902 among the French-Canadian community that New Bedford might be selected as the seat of a new Diocese and St.



Anthony's grand architectural plan included many hallmarks of a cathedral. Indeed, the naming of Fall River as the seat of the new diocese and the laying of St. Anthony's cornerstone came within three months of each other in 1904.

Fr. Deslauriers was born in Saint Therese, Quebec, on March 27, 1861. Fr. Deslauriers' father was a builder of churches in Canada. He was ordained August 10, 1886 at Notre Dame de Lourdes, Montreal. He died June 19, 1916 in the rectory. His body was interred in the south courtyard of the church on Nye Street. The New Bedford City Council met in special session to grant this special burial place for this great man of the Church. A large bronze tablet with his image marks his grave.

1896 – The first St. Anthony of Padua parish church was simple wood-frame structure on Bullard Street, which also housed the parish grammar school. The first Mass was celebrated March 8th, 1896.

1896 – 9/1: Grammar school started with 300 pupils & Holy Cross Sisters of St. Larent Quebec.

1896 - Rectory was completed in December. The design was typical of a 19th century chapter house, built of brick in the 2nd Empire style, with mansard roofs and gables, and located on the northwest corner of Acushnet Avenue and Nye Street.

1902 – Prominent Montreal architect, Joseph Venne, completes his plans for a cathedral-like church for St. Anthony's parish to replace the original wooden church.

Joseph Venne, Architect: Venne also designed the Basilica of Joseph's Oratory on Mont Royal in Montreal (1924). Venne was instrumental in defining the look of Montreal, designing over 100 buildings from 1880 to 1925. Once of Montreal's great architects, Venne's ornate aesthetic can be seen in a wide variety of buildings including the Notre-Dame-de-Bonsecours chapel, the Monument-National theatre and the St-Enfant-Jésus du Mile-End church to less well-known houses, apartments, banks and fire stations around the city. Venne was also responsible for drafting Montreal's first Building Code and pioneering the construction of safer, fire-resistant buildings.

Écomusée du fier monde, which focuses on local Montreal history, recently mounted “**Jos. Venne, Architecte,**” an exhibit, which focused on this pivotal and somewhat forgotten individual responsible in large part for forging Montreal's unique aesthetic. The exhibit closed June 2002.

1904 – March 12th, Fall River Diocese formed

1904 – June 5th, St. Anthony's Cornerstone is laid. Huge parade of 3000 marched from City Hall to the St. Anthony's as part of the ceremonies. Dr. Urbalde Paquin was the grand marshal. Bishop Stang, first Bishop of the Fall River Diocese, blessed the cornerstone.

1904 – Sept. 20th, 4PM the Clerestory wall of the North Transept collapsed, killing two workers and injuring five others.

1905 – Construction resumes in the spring.



CHURCH DIMENSIONS:

Steeple Height: 256 ft.

Nave: Length: 241 ft.

Nave width: 80 ft.

Nave Height: 65 ft.

Transepts: 135 ft.

Lower steeples: 135 ft

Gold-plated, bronze cross atop the steeple is 19 ft in height. It was raised New Year's Day, 1906. Its base was inscribed with the names of the parishioners. Arsene Roy, a New Bedford metalworker built/installed the cross.

Seating Capacity: Nave 1400; balcony: 300, Choir loft 40; Sanctuary Chancel (Choir) 100;

Total Church capacity: 1840

The entire church including furnishing cost \$342,000, between 1903 and 1912.

St. Anthony's exterior is constructed of **Springfield red sandstone** quarried at Springfield/Longmeadow, MA. Sandstone is a coarse-grained, sedimentary rock consisting of consolidated masses of sand deposited by moving water or by wind. The chemical constitution of sandstone is the same as that of sand, composed essentially of quartz. The cementing material that binds together the grains of sand is usually composed of silica, calcium carbonate, or iron oxide.

Granite blocks for the foundation came from Denault's quarry, part of Sullivan's Ledge.

St. Anthony of Padua Church's basic Architectural Style: Romanesque Cruciform: It is built in the shape of a cross, the nave is barrel-vaulted, and the windows and doors are rounded at the tops, typical of the Romanesque revival style, which was popular in late 19th century America.

The Gloria, is located in the ceiling at the Crossing, the intersection of the Nave & Transepts. The Gloria depicts the Holy Spirit in the form of a dove. The Dove, or Paraclete, or Comforter (L. *Consolator*; Gr. *parakletos*), is an appellation of the Holy Ghost. The Greek word which, as a designation of the Holy Ghost at least, occurs only in St. John (xiv, 16, 26; xv, 26; xvi, 7), has been variously translated "advocate", "intercessor", "teacher", "helper", "comforter". According to St. John, the mission of the Paraclete is to abide with the disciples after Jesus has withdrawn His visible presence from them; to inwardly bring home to them the teaching externally given by Christ and thus to stand as a witness to the doctrine and work of the Savior.

The Gloria surrounded by the Tetramorph



The Tetramorph is a term which refers to symbolic forms used to represent the Four Evangelists, Jesus' Disciples who gave us the Gospels: St. Matthew, St. Mark, St. Luke, and St. John. The symbolic forms are: An Angel/Human = St. Matthew; The Lion = St. Mark; The Ox = St. Luke; The Eagle = St. John. These forms, described in Ezekiel's vision & the Book of Revelations 4:5-11, have been depicted in church architecture and in illuminated manuscripts for centuries.

The **Tympanum** above the main exterior doors of the center entrance carries a Latin inscription, which translates: “The working people of Saint Anthony hath built this temple to the Lord.”

GIOVANNI CASTAGNOLI'S CHOIRS OF ANGELS

Giovanni Castagnoli (1863-1914) was born in Borgo Taro, Italy, near Parma and studied art in Florence. He also worked on the (now lost) Notre Dame Church in Fall River as well as the Church of the Blessed Sacrament in that city. Several other churches in New England towns, including Berlin, NH, also feature his work. Angels from many of the nine celestial choirs figure prominently in Castagnoli's decorative plan of the interior of St. Anthony's. There are 32 large angels mounted in the nave and sanctuary; six are 10 ½ feet tall, and 26 are 8 ½ feet tall.



Seraphim are the highest order or choir of angels. They are the angels who are attendants or guardians before God's throne. They praise God, singing, "Holy, Holy, Holy is the Lord of Hosts." At Anthony's, they are also sculpted upon the four supporting columns of the Crossing. This quartet of the Seraphim are here depicted with trumpets blazing, symbolizing the celestial and earthly celebration of the Risen Savior.

Cherubim second highest in the nine hierarchies or choirs of angels. The Old Testament does not reveal any evidence that the Jews considered them as intercessors or helpers of God. They were closely linked in God's glory. They are man-like in appearance, double-winged and are often portrayed as infants. In St. Anthony's, they adorn the arches of the aisles on either side of the nave and populate the heavens in the “Vision of St. Anthony,” above the main altar. They are also depicted in some of the stained glass windows.

The Lower ranks of the nine hierarchies include: **Thrones** (Angels of pure Humility); **Dominions** (Angels of Leadership); **Virtues** (referred to as "the shining ones"); and **Powers** (Warrior Angels against evil). **Archangels** are depicted in several scenes in St. Anthony's stain glass windows and statuary. They are generally taken to mean "chief or leading angel" (Jude 9; 1 Thes 4:16), they are the most frequently mentioned throughout the Bible. St. Michael the Archangel is a princely Seraph, and revered by the Portuguese as a protector of the Azores. Archangels have a unique role as God's messengers to the people at critical times (i.e. The Annunciation). Also, the angel Gabriel first appeared in the Old Testament in the prophesies of Daniel, he announced the prophecy of 70 weeks (Dn 9:21-27). He appeared to Zechariah to announce the birth of St. John the Baptist (Lk 1:11). It was also Gabriel, which proclaimed the Annunciation of Mary to be the mother of our Lord and Savior. (Lk 1:26). **Principalities** and **Angels**, the final tiers of the hierarchies, are closest to the material world and to human beings.

Angels also flank Castagnoli's massive **Stations of the Cross**, said to be some of the largest Stations in the world. The angels at each Station hold objects associated with the Passion of the Christ. Their sorrowful demeanor bespeak of the agony of the celestial choirs during Jesus' sacrifice. Castagnoli sculptured the First Station (the original is in place) and from it cast the other thirteen.

JOSEPH MARTINELLI'S MARBLEIZING OF ST. ANTHONY'S INTERIOR

Most of the interior marble surfaces of St. Anthony's were created by a process called **scagliola** (pronounced “Skal-lee-ola”) by Joseph Martinelli Studios of New York. This process involved inculcating the final plaster surfaces with marble

dust and special pigments, skillfully applied to imitate actual marble. Martinelli, a master of this decorative technique, had created similar effects at some of the pavilions of the Pan-American Exposition of 1901, in Buffalo, NY. Incidentally, it was at the Exposition that electric lights made a sensation, used by the thousands to decorate the ornate buildings (the Electric Tower still stands today in Buffalo, a city landmark).

ST. ANTHONY'S NAVE & TRANCEPT ADORNED WITH 5,500 ELCTRIC LIGHTS

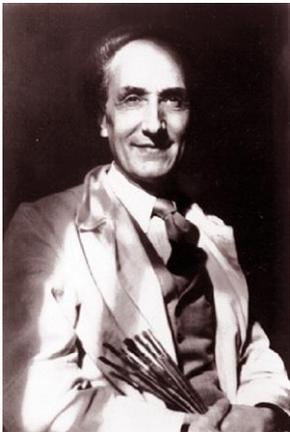
Clearly, the installation of thousands of electric lights throughout St. Anthony's ceilings and arches was meant to inspire the congregation and enhance Castignolli's magnificent sculpture. In an era when electric light was still a relatively new phenomenon, its impact doubtless created a sense of awe and wonderment, even as it does today, almost a century later. Mr. Manny of Montreal, assisted by a local crew, installed the 5,500 lights into the decorative plaster.

Sam Whitlow, a New Bedford Electrical contractor, installed the massive electric switchboard in 1903. His grandson, Lou Whitlow, continued in the business and continues to assist the City of New Bedford with the lighting displays for the holiday season at Clasky-Common Park.

The black slate 400A switchboard was built by Trumbull Electric Co. It controls the 5 altars, 14 Stations of the Cross as well as the other power needs in the sacristy. The switchboard consists of 26 knife switches mounted on the slate board. Chief Inspector of Wires, Hugh Murray, saved the glass-enclosed switchboard in 1984. Murray recognized the switchboard as a rare example of the finest early electrical work and having carefully inspected it for safety declared that it continue in operation, due to its remarkable workmanship and quality of materials.

THE WORK OF GUIDO NINCHERI, opus 1952-1956

Born in Prato in Tuscany, the master stained-glass maker and decorator Guido Nincheri (1885-1973) immigrated to Montréal in 1914. In 1920, he set up his studio in Maisonneuve (at 1832 Pie-IX Boulevard), where he produced about 2,000 stained-glass windows. His studio is now closed but Matteo Martirano, one of his former students and friends, used it until 1997. Considered to be one of the principal masters of stained glass in Canada, he earned many distinctions. On April 6 1933, Pope Pius XI appointed Nincheri a Knight-Commander of the Order of Saint-Sylvester, thereby acknowledging him as one of the great artists of the Church. In 1972, he was named Knight of the Republic in his Italian homeland. Twenty years later, Nincheri was given the posthumous title of Builder of the City of Montreal.



Master of Stained Glass and Frescoes, born in Prato, a Tuscan city renowned for its textiles, Guido Nincheri studied painting, drawing and architecture at the Academy of Fine Arts in Florence. It was there that the master Adolfo De Carolis taught him the technique of fresco painting.

In 1914, Nincheri and his new wife, Guilia, embarked on a trip for Argentina to visit some former classmates. The outbreak of the First World War forced the couple to stay in Boston, their first port of call, where Nincheri obtained a contract to decorate the city's Opera House. Six months later, the Nincheri immigrated to Montreal.

Known as the city of a hundred church bells, Canada's metropolis was booming. Several new Catholic parishes, mostly French Canadian, were founded during this period. All the new church building created a great demand for the skills and reputation of European artists and artisans.

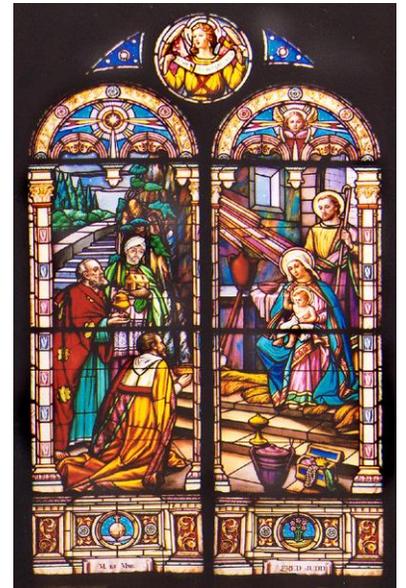
Nincheri's first contract in Montreal was the interior decoration of Saint-Viateur d'Outremont church. He also assisted the stained-glass artist Henri Perdriau (Angers, 1877 - Montreal, 1850), by drawing the paper designs for the transept windows, which illustrate the Immaculate Conception (left transept window) and the Eucharistic Conference of Montreal, in 1910 (right transept window). It seems likely that Perdriau was the one to introduce Guido Nincheri to the art of stained

glass. In 1921, Nincheri opened his own stained glass studio on the ground floor of 1832 Pie-IX Boulevard in space lent to him by his patrons, Marius and Oscar Dufresne, two pillars of Montreal's francophone bourgeoisie.

Nincheri devoted most of his long and productive career to the making of religious art and there are few known examples of his secular work, but two major exceptions stand out: the interior decoration of the Chateau Dufresne, built by the Dufresne brothers in the 1920's and the interior decoration of the Roger Williams Park Natural History Museum, in Providence Rhode Island where Nincheri lived towards the end of his life. Guido Nincheri died in Providence on March 1st, 1973, at the age of 87.

NINCHERI'S STAIN GLASS WINDOWS

Appointed by Fr. Albert Berube in 1952, Guido Nincheri enhanced and greatly added to Castagnoli's original plan. The Nincheri contributions were part of the first refurbishment of the church since it was dedicated 40 year earlier. Nincheri also created the decorative murals on the ceilings and upper niches of the Cerestory. The Nincheri windows in St. Anthony's depict 14 of the 15 mysteries of the Rosary in the lower nave. The 15th Mystery is depicted in the North Transept Triptych.



The Joyful Mysteries

1. Annunciation - The Angel Gabriel brings God's message to Mary
2. Visitation - Mary visits her cousin Elizabeth
3. Nativity - Jesus is born in Bethlehem
4. Presentation - Jesus is presented in the temple
5. Finding in the Temple - Jesus is found in the temple

The Sorrowful Mysteries

1. Agony in the Garden - Jesus sweats blood.
2. Scourging at the Pillar
3. Crowning with Thorns
4. Carrying of the Cross
5. Crucifixion - Jesus dies on the cross.

The Glorious Mysteries

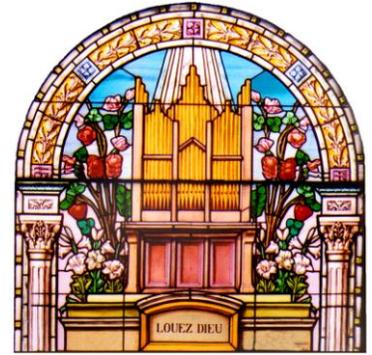
1. The Resurrection - Jesus rises from the dead.
2. The Ascension - Jesus ascends into Heaven.
3. The Descent of the Holy Spirit upon the apostles.
4. The Assumption - The Virgin Mary is taken up to Heaven.
5. The Coronation - Mary is crowned Queen of Heaven and Earth (North Transept Triptych).

The 117 Stain glass windows in St. Anthony's required 9000 pieces of glass and 2670 hours of work in Nincheri's Montreal atelier.

The Choir loft windows depict St. Cecelia, patron saint of music and St. Gregory

The **North Transept triptych**: Mary, Queen of Heaven, the 15th Glorious Mystery.

Left panel: St. Dominic, St. Pious V, St. Maria Goretti. The heroic virgin-martyr St. Maria Goretti (1890-1902) was beatified by Pope Pius XII on April 27, 1947 and canonized by the same Supreme Pontiff on June 25, 1950. She is the patron saint of youth.



Right Panel: St. Anthony, St. Therese and St Pious X.

The **South Transept triptych**: Christ the King (dedicated Christmas Day 1956). It depicts Christ in the center with Pope Pious XI beneath him, who established the feast day of Christ the King in 1925. On either side of altar stand Eugenio Cardinal Pacelli (Pope Pious XII, who declared St. Anthony a Doctor of the Church in 1946).

Left Panel: Missionaries from around the world, Including Fr Jean de Brebeuf a martyr. Near him is Kateri Tekakwitha, the Iroquois girl beatified by the Church

Right Panel: St. Francis Xavier, a Jesuit who lived in Asia. And St. Pierre Chanel, who founded the Marist Order of Missionaries.

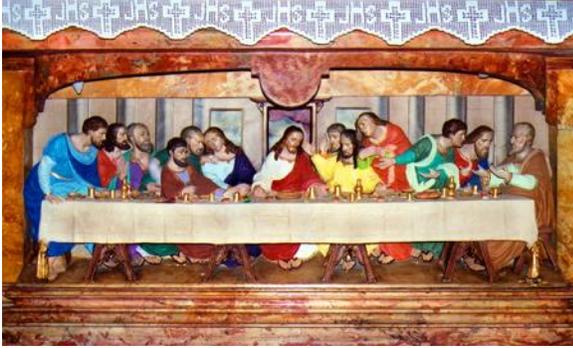
NINCHERI'S PULPIT

Castagnoli's original pulpit wrapped around the southeast pillar at the transept crossing. However, time reveal that this situation made it difficult for the congregation to see and hear the homilist. Nincheri's plan featured a gleaming white marble pulpit just within the sanctuary, west of the altar rail and to the congregation's left of the main altar. Cut out of solid Carrara marble by the Del Bono del Atre, a prestigious atelier in Marno Italy, it weighed 10 tons and required special supports in the basement of the church. Installed in 1953, it cost \$15,000.00. The pulpit' façade features six niches in sienna marble, each with a statue of a saint carved in full. These Doctors of the Church are from left to right: St. John Chrysostom (Asia); St. Augustine (Africa); St. Anthony (Portugal/Italy); St. Albert the Great (Germany); St. Thomas Aquinas (Italy); St. Bernard (France).

COMPONENTS OF ST. ANTHONY'S ARCHITECTURE

- **Aisles:** The passageways of a church or cathedral, separated from the Nave by rows of pillars; generally running along the north and south sides of the nave.
- **Ambulatory:** Originally designed for use in processions, the Ambulatory is a semicircular aisle or passageway, which navigates the base of the apse behind the main alter. In St. Anthony's design, the Ambulatory is not passable but is utilized for the support of the massive sculptural diorama, "The Vision of St. Anthony" in the apse above the main altar.

- **Apse:** A vaulted element in a church or cathedral that serves to terminate a semicircular Aisle or Chapel. The Apse, generally domed, will often form the area above altar. The term is derived from the Medieval Latin: **absis** or **apsis**. In St. Anthony's, the Apse contains Castinoli's sculptural masterpiece and the central design element of the Sanctuary, "The Vision of St. Anthony," which is lighted naturally by 50-foot windows on both the north and south sides of the Apse.



- **Antependium:** The decorated frontispiece directly beneath the main altar. At St. Anthony's the antependium depicts Da Vinci's "Last Supper" sculpted in high relief by Castagnoli.
- **Chancel or Sanctuary Choir:** This area is located between the Sanctuary and the Nave, in which facing pews on either side of the main altar are traditionally reserved for clergy, acolytes or choir, where psalms are sung. Typically an element found only in cathedrals, the Chancel in St. Anthony's is evidence that the parish had hopes that their new church might be considered as the potential seat of a new diocese to be set off from Providence in 1904. However, Fall River, not New Bedford was named the seat of the new diocese that year.
- **Chapter house:** The administrative center or Bishop's office, attached to a cathedral, traditionally organized for the overseeing of a cathedral's construction and maintenance. St. Anthony's brick rectory, located on the southeast corner of the church, is a typical chapter house design of the late 19th century.
- **Clerestory:** The third level above the church floor, the Clerestory forms the walls of the uppermost area of the Nave, Transepts and Choir, above the Triforium, and just below the ceiling. The clerestory walls contain mostly stained glass windows (ergo, "clear-story").
- **Crossing:** The central space of a church or cathedral, being the intersection of the Nave and the Transepts. At St. Anthony's, the Gloria, which depicts the Holy Spirit surrounded by the Four Evangelists, is the central element in the ceiling of the crossing.
- **Narthex:** A ceilinged porch or vestibule situated west of the Nave and Aisles. (Sometimes referred to as a **Galilee**.)
- **Nave:** The central body of a church or cathedral usually oriented east-to-west, where a majority of the pews are situated for the seating of the congregation. The Nave is boarded along its length by side aisles.
- **Parvis:** An exterior courtyard or walled area situated before the main entrances a church or cathedral, used for assembly of processions entering the church.
- **Porch:** The reception space situated immediately before the main entrance to a church or cathedral.
- **Sanctuary:** The area that contains the main altar. The area of a church or cathedral reserved for the clergy.
- **Predella:** A step on which the altar is placed.

- **Sacristy:** The secure chamber adjacent to the Sanctuary used by the clergy and acolytes for preparation before Holy Mass and ceremonies. The Sacristy is also where vestments are kept.
- **Spire:** A tapering, often elegant, structure set atop a tower. In certain instances, the tower itself has been designed as a spire. On churches, smaller scale spires are often referred to as Steeples.
- **Transepts:** The north and south projecting extensions of a Cruciform style church or cathedral, crossing at right angles to the greater length of the Nave.
- **Triforium:** The second level above the church floor, the Triforium is a projecting walkway or passageway formed by colonnades. The Triforium circumnavigates the periphery of the interior of the church, above the Nave, and just below the Clerestory.

CASAVANT FRERES ORGAN INSTALLED IN 1912

Casavant Freres continues to build some of the world's greatest pipe organs in St. Hyacinthe, Québec. The Casavent Organ (opus 489) at St. Anthony's is massive: 4 manuals (or keyboards) of 61 notes each; 56 stops; 30 couplers.

Michel Labens (1921-1999) was organist from 1953 to 1999. He graduated with honors from the Royal Institute For the Blind at Brussels and studied music at Maline, Belgium. He immigrated to New Bedford in 1953, recommended for appointment as Choirmaster at Saint Anthony's. Mr. Labens was a master organist in the finest European tradition. His expertise in 19th Century French liturgical music was well known in the United States and Canada. He also instructed generations of New Bedford students in piano, organ and violin. He died October 21, 1999.



In 1956, the Spire was illuminated at night, as its enormous height posed a risk to the aircraft of nearby New Bedford Municipal Airport. The lighting has also added to the St. Anthony's visibility as one of New Bedford's great landmarks. Along the outer approach to New Bedford harbor, St. Anthony's 256-foot spire appears aligned and centered with the open gates of the city's Hurricane Barrier, welcoming homeward bound fishing vessels. Indeed, St. Anthony's can be seen by vessels from almost every point on Buzzards Bay.

In 1963, Monsignor Berube had installed in St. Anthony's tower the Schulmerich Marian Carillon, an electronic device that replicates the tones of ten great bells and amplified via speakers in the belfry. This solution alleviated the fear that very tall steeple might not bear the weight of a traditional bronze carillon.

In 1982, Father Chabot invited Danford "Barrie" Lee to do restoration work in the church, primarily on the Stations of the Cross. Lee died in 1990 and the work remained incomplete. It was re-commenced under the direction of **Rev. Monsignor Edmond R. Levesque**, appointed as pastor in 1990 by Bishop Daniel Cronin.

FINAL THOUGHTS

French-Canadians came to the New Bedford area in great numbers between 1860 and 1930 to work in the booming textile mills. Fiercely proud of their religious and cultural traditions, these "working people of St. Antoine" made sure the spire of their church would be taller than any factory smoke stack under which they toiled. St. Anthony's was at once a dramatic statement to the community at-large that the French-Canadians had taken their place in the city, bringing to and enriching it with their immense faith, heritage and tradition.

Today, though fewer parishioners at St. Anthony's are of French-Canadian heritage, the parish continues to persevere under the tireless leadership of **Rev. Monsignor Edmond R. Levesque**, with the assistance of the Rev. Christopher Gomes, OFM Conv. Many families of Portuguese heritage now worship at St. Anthony's. Indeed, this parish church, named in honor of the patron saint of Lisbon, inspires them as it did the working families who sacrificed to build it. And more recently, growing numbers of families of Spanish-speaking heritage are choosing St. Anthony's.



In a 1909 article, the Standard-Times summed up this great church, calling St. Anthony of Padua... *“an architectural prayer, by its very loveliness an offering of praise to God.”*

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