

Welcome



The Cathedral Church of
Saint John the Divine

Self-Guided Highlights Tour

1 The Great Bronze doors cast by Barbedienne of Paris, who also cast the Statue of Liberty, are each 18-feet high, 6 feet wide and weigh 3 tons. The doors are comprised of 60 panels in bas-relief depicting scenes from the Old and New Testaments.

2 The magnificent 40-foot diameter Great Rose window in the West Facade is the largest in the United States. Designed by Charles J. Connick, it contains over 10,000 pieces of glass. The figure of Christ at its center is 5 feet 7 inches tall.

3 The Poets' Corner salutes America's literary greats, whose names are inscribed in stone plaques in the floor. Among the writers honored are Mark Twain, Washington Irving, Edgar Allan Poe, Emily Dickinson, Ernest Hemingway, F. Scott Fitzgerald, Nathaniel Hawthorne, Herman Melville, and Gertrude Stein.

4 The magnificent Gothic nave features 14 themed bays honoring professions and human endeavor. Stained glass windows depict thematic scenes with religious and secular images including a 1925 prototype television, a human skeleton, St. George and the Dragon and Michelangelo carving *David*. The Acts of the Apostles tapestries hanging in many bays are based on 16th century drawings by Raphael.

5 The Cathedral's treasures include the priceless Barberini Tapestries, *Scenes from the Life of Christ*. The 12 works were created in the 17th century on the Papal Looms in Rome.

6 The beautiful shallow dome that covers the great Crossing was erected as a temporary roof by Rafael Guastavino in 1909 and took only 15 weeks to complete. The Statue of Liberty, minus her pedestal would fit comfortably under the immense structure.

7 The Cathedral's choir is one of the finest examples of Romanesque architecture in the United States.

8 The eight massive granite columns that surround the High Altar were quarried on the island of Vinalhaven, Maine. Each is 55 feet tall, 6 feet in diameter, and weighs 130 tons.

9 The two 12-foot Menorahs were dedicated in 1930 by Bishop Manning. They were given by Adolph Ochs, the founder/publisher of the *New York Times*.

10 Two painted enamel vases were gifts from Japanese Emperor Hirohito in 1926.

11 Two gilded teak prayer chests are gifts from the King of Siam, given in 1930.

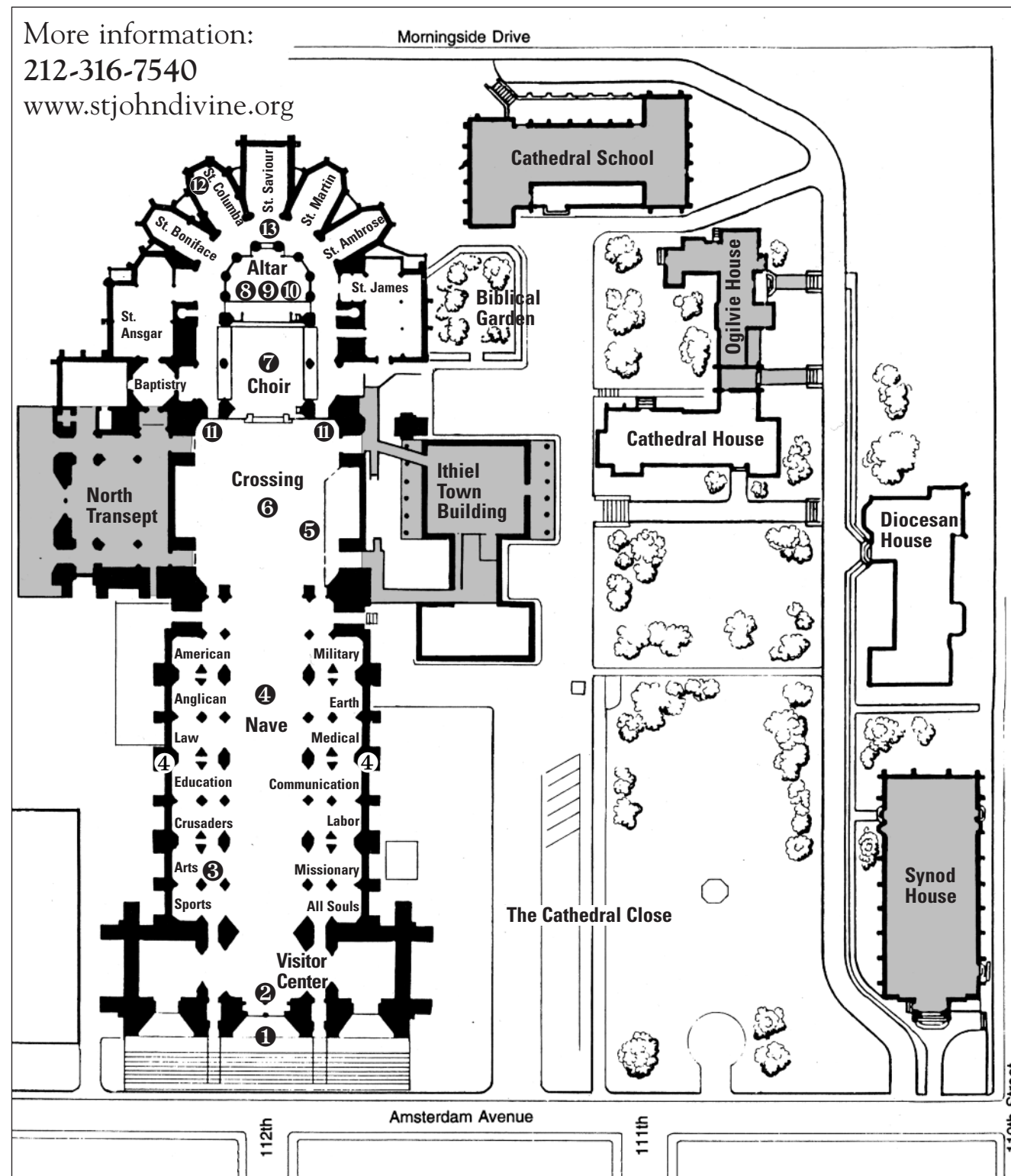
12 The white gold triptych created by Keith Haring in 1989 is in the shape of a Russian icon. An interpretation of the life of Christ, it is the last sculptural piece created by the artist before his death in 1990.

13 The Chapels of the Tongues surrounding the High Altar are dedicated to seven immigrant groups that settled in the United States during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Their architectural styles range from Norman to High Renaissance.

More information:

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www.stjohndivine.org



History

The long history of the Cathedral is an ongoing story and you are experiencing the current chapter. It is an extraordinary narrative. Here are a few highlights.

St. John the Divine was conceived as the centerpiece of an American Acropolis on Morningside Heights. Its institutional neighbors include St. Luke's-Roosevelt Hospital, Columbia University, Barnard College, Union Theological Seminary, Riverside Church, the Jewish Theological Seminary, Bank Street College of Education, and the Manhattan School of Music.

Important Dates

1785 Episcopal Diocese of New York is founded.

1828 Former New York City Mayor Philip Hone and Bishop John Henry Hobart privately discuss plans for a cathedral.

1872 At the Diocesan Convention Bishop Horatio Potter raises the subject of constructing a cathedral; it is unanimously approved.

1873 State legislature grants Charter for the Cathedral Church of St. John the Divine.

1888 The 13-acre Leake and Watts Orphan Asylum is chosen as the site of the future Cathedral.

1891 The New York architectural firm of Heins and LaFarge wins the international design competition for the Cathedral with its Byzantine-Romanesque plan.

1892 Cornerstone laid on St. John's Day, December 27.

1911 East End of the Cathedral is dedicated. Ralph Adams Cram is named new Cathedral architect.

1925 Cornerstone laid for nave.

1941 Cathedral unveils its 601-foot length in dedication ceremonies one week before the bombing of Pearl Harbor. Construction ceases.

1979 Construction resumes. Cathedral Stoneworks is established to train local youth as stonecutters and to begin building South Tower.

1994 South Tower construction ceases. Cathedral launches a preservation and site improvement initiative for the entire close.

2001 December fire destroys the Cathedral's North Transept and causes extensive smoke damage to Cathedral interior.

2003 Post-fire cleaning and restoration of Cathedral begins.

2008 Post-fire cleaning completed. Cathedral rededicated and full length revealed once more.