

# YOUR CATHEDRAL TODAY

Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception

December 2017

125 Eagle Street • Albany, NY 12202-1797 • Phone (518) 463-4447 • Fax (518) 514-1441 • [www.cathedralic.com](http://www.cathedralic.com) • [info@cathedralic.com](mailto:info@cathedralic.com)

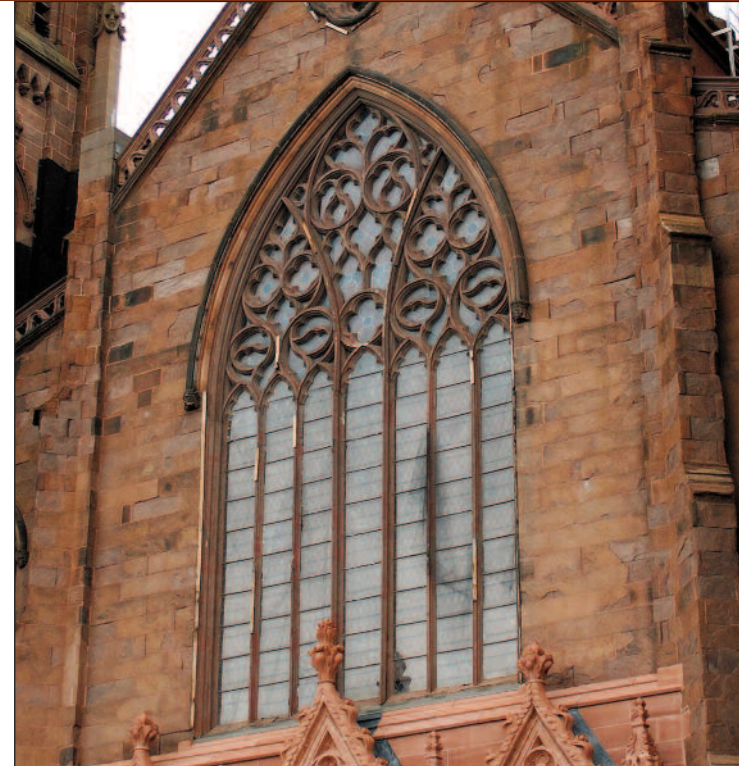


## HISTORIC EAST WINDOW & TRACERY BEING RESTORED

As part of the ongoing restoration of the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception, the great East Window, overlooking the main entrance to the Cathedral, will be restored in two phases thanks in part to a grant from the New York State Office of Parks, Restoration and Historic Preservation and the Capital Community Assistance Program.

The 20' X 38' window is comprised of two separate sections set into a wooden tracery, all dating back to 1852, the year the Cathedral was dedicated and opened to the public in grand ceremonies presided over by Archbishop John Hughes of New York and Bishop John McCloskey, first Bishop of Albany.

The top section of the window is a Neo-Gothic design of multi-colored glass panels, purely decorative, depicting no religious iconography. The bottom section of the window contains multiple rows of diamond-shaped clear panes or lights of glass called "cathedral glass."



Historic East Window & Tracery Being Restored See Pg 3

## Future Needs

More stone restoration is planned for the east façade, south tower and transepts.



Future Needs See Pg 6

## RESTORATION OF THE CATHEDRAL SACRISTIES



In 2016, then Cathedral Administrator, Father Michael Farano, was asked by Bishop Scharfenberger to undertake a complete restoration of the Cathedral's sacristies which had fallen into serious disrepair due to wear, tear, and water damage.

**Restoration of the Cathedral Sacristies See Pg 5**

## Christmas Mass Schedule

### December 24

Fourth Sunday of Advent

Saturday Vigil: 5:15 p.m.

Sunday: 9:00 a.m., 11:00 a.m.



### December 24

Christmas Eve

Vigil of Christmas

Mass for families with children:

5:15 p.m.

Service of Lessons & Carols:

11:15 p.m.

Midnight Mass: 12:00 Midnight –

Bishop Scharfenberger, Presider

### December 25

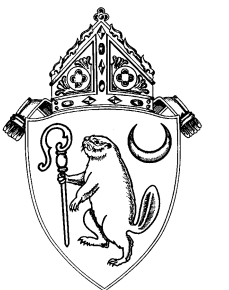
Christmas Day

10:00 a.m. Mass – Bishop

Scharfenberger, Presider



*+Edward B. Scharfenberger*





Administration

The Most Reverend  
Edward B. Scharfenberger, D.D.  
Bishop of Albany

The Very Reverend  
William H. Pape  
Rector

The Very Reverend  
David R. LeFort, S.T.L., V.G.  
Administrator

The Reverend  
John F. Tallman  
Parochial Vicar

In residence  
The Most Reverend Howard J.  
Hubbard, D.D., Bishop Emeritus

Religious Education  
and Faith Formation  
Dr. Thomas Fowler

Cathedral Social  
Services/Food Pantry  
Sister Margaret Mary Hohl, D.C.

Director of Music and Organist  
Dr. Brian F. Gurley, D.M.A.

Coordinator of Development /  
Public Relations / Events  
Mr. Thomas M. Prindle

Administrative Assistant  
Lucy McHenry

Parish Bookkeeper  
Mrs. Kathy Zorian

Facilities Manager  
Mr. Kurt Schlachter

Sacristan  
Mr. Brian Cosgrave  
Mr. Martin Powell

Parish Council Chairperson  
Ms. Geraldine Johnson



My dear friends,



I cannot help but to reflect that the blessed and joyous feast of Christmas 2017 will mark the 165th Christmas celebrated in our Cathedral, the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception, which first opened its doors to the faithful on November 21, 1852. Amazingly, over the span of 165 continuous years the Cathedral has served as the Mother Church of our diocese, standing as a sacred sentinel among the secular buildings housing government and commerce in the capital city of our state.

I wish to thank you for your support and dedication over the years as very good friends in helping to preserve our historic Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception. The monumental restoration work lovingly taken on and completed over the last two decades, thanks to the generosity of numerous benefactors, is truly a testament to the special place our Mother Church holds in the hearts of her people.

It is my hope and prayer that our Cathedral will continue to shine as a legacy bequeathed to us by the generations of faithful gone before and will stand for many generations to come, proclaiming the Gospel of Our Lord Jesus Christ.

May you and yours have a most blessed Christmas and a Happy New Year!

Sincerely yours in Christ,  
*+Edward B. Scharfenberger*  
Edward B. Scharfenberger  
Bishop of Albany

Dear friends,



It is indeed a pleasant task, in my new assignment as Administrator of the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception, to greet you as a good friend and faithful supporter of our historic diocesan mother church. I am grateful to God, yet humbled, to be entrusted with the daunting care of this venerable and sacred place. I pray that He bestow abundant grace and blessings over our Cathedral Parish and extended family of friends.

Our intention in publishing Your Cathedral Today is to keep you informed about what is happening at the Cathedral and what is being accomplished in continuing the important work of restoration and renewal. In this issue you will read about the great east window overlooking Eagle Street, installed in 1852, which will be completely restored beginning in the spring of 2018.

Each time I enter the Cathedral it feels like I am entering for the first time. I am swept up into the soaring vaults, arches, stained glass and statuary calling to mind the words of Pope Francis who writes, “With Christ joy is constantly born anew.”

Friends, it is my hope that you will visit the Cathedral often and experience the majesty and wonder of Almighty God and the peace that is His Son.

Sincerely in Christ,  
*David R. LeFort*  
The Very Rev. David R. LeFort, S.T.L., V.G.  
Administrator of the Cathedral

HISTORIC EAST WINDOW & TRACERY BEING RESTORED

From Pg 1

It is believed that the window was made in the studio of glass maker William Wailes in Newcastle On Tyne, England along with the celebrated “Lady Window” which was originally set into the west wall and moved to its present location in the North Transept. Both windows were in place when the doors were first opened to the public on November 21, 1852.

The East Window was long obscured by the towering Neo-Gothic organ pipe cases in the choir loft, yet as morning sunlight poured in from over the Hudson River, the window revealed itself bathing the Cathedral's vaulted ceiling and columns with a kaleidoscope of dazzling color.

By 2010 when the most recent restoration of the Cathedral's interior was completed, the window tracery had deteriorated to a critical point of no return and was literally in danger of failure, posing a serious threat to pub-

lic safety. After completing the restoration of the Cathedral's entrance portals and steps in 2013, it was decided the next piece in the restoration story had to be the East Window. A contractor was selected in September 2017 and work is now underway. Overseeing the restoration project is architect Larry Wilson, principal partner of the Albany based firm and long-time architects for the Cathedral, Mesick Cohen Wilson Baker Architects, LLP. The project is expected to be completed by the summer of 2018. Restorative elements will include removal, cleaning, replacement and re-leading of decorative glass, replacement of broken Cathedral glass lights and Dutchman repairs to and painting of the original wood tracery of 1852. Included in the scope of work will be cleaning and painting the wrought iron cresting along the center roof line and restoration of the Cathedral's two



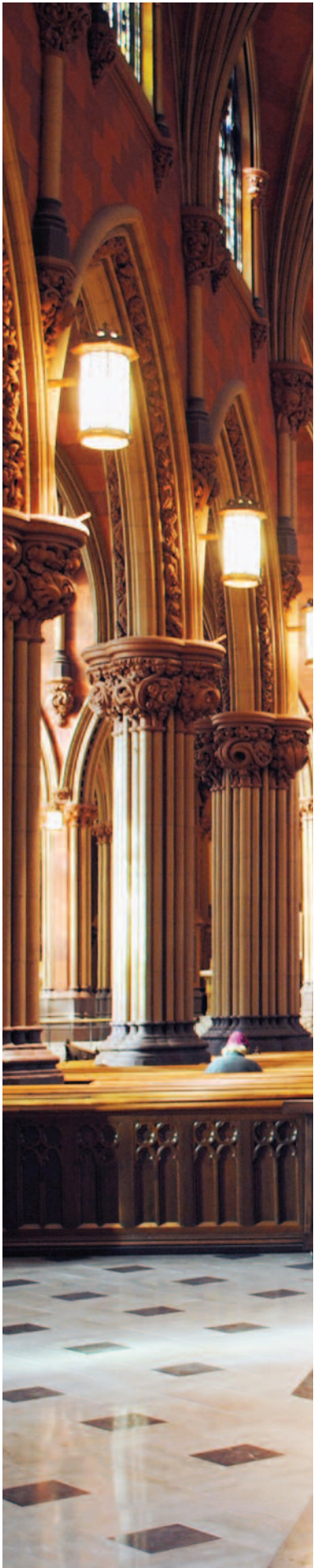
Greenmen on East Window

stone “greenmen” flanking either side of the stone arch of the East Window. Greenmen and gargoyles were distinct features of medieval Cathedral design.



The photo below depicting the interior of the Cathedral decorated for Christmas in the 1860's shows how the east window was obscured for well over 150 years by the great pipe organ and case, the last iteration of which was removed during the interior restoration of 2008 - 2010.





## CATHEDRAL TOURS

Come with your family and take a tour of your Cathedral. Planning a trip to the NYS State Museum or the State Capitol? Make the Cathedral part of your day.

The tour experience includes the Cathedral's magnificent 19th century stained glass, carved woodwork, the Bishop's sacristy, stations of the cross and the bishops crypt in which six of Albany's Bishops were laid to rest.

Tours of the Cathedral for groups, individuals and schools can be arranged by calling 518.463.4447



## RESTORATION OF THE CATHEDRAL SACRISTIES

From Pg 1

Father Farano engaged the architectural firm of Mesick Cohen Wilson Baker LLP, the long- time architects overseeing the Cathedral restoration. Heading up the project was Senior Partner, Larry Wilson, and Project Manager, Geoff Miles, who supervised the subcontractors in day to day work.

The sacristies and ambulatory were built and completed under Bishop Francis J. McNeirny in 1891 as part of his historic expansion to the Cathedral's sanctuary, providing space for the bishop and clergy to prepare and vest for liturgies and diocesan celebrations. Over time, the sacristies functioned as multi-purpose spaces for vesting, storage, and meetings.

It was decided to address the two first floor sacristies connected by an ambulatory behind the rear sanctuary wall. The ambulatory was also included in the scope of work. The work was funded from a bequest to the Cathedral and from the generosity of private donations.

The project was completed and the sacristies were blessed and dedicated by Bishop Scharfenberger in August 2017.



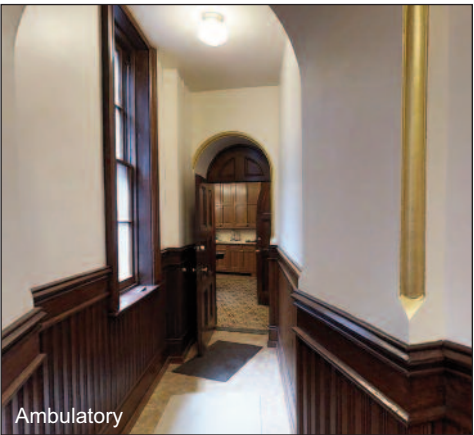
Bishop's Sacristy



Bishop's Sacristy



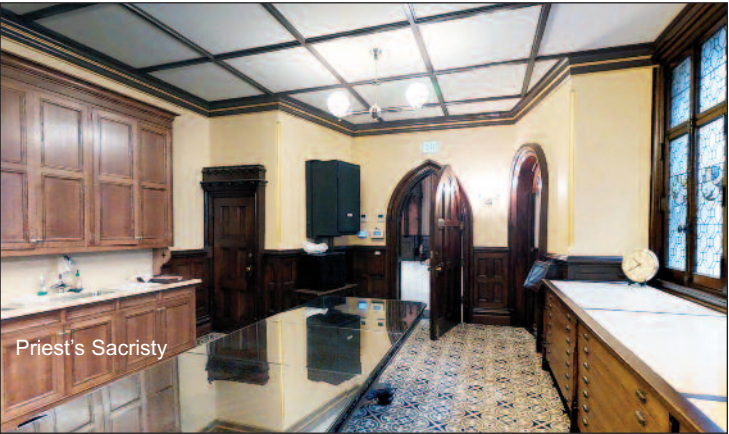
Bishop's Sacristy



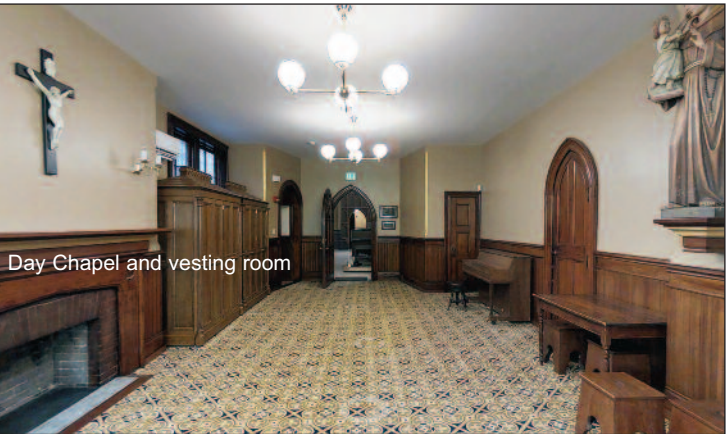
Ambulatory



Priest's Sacristy



Priest's Sacristy



Day Chapel and vesting room

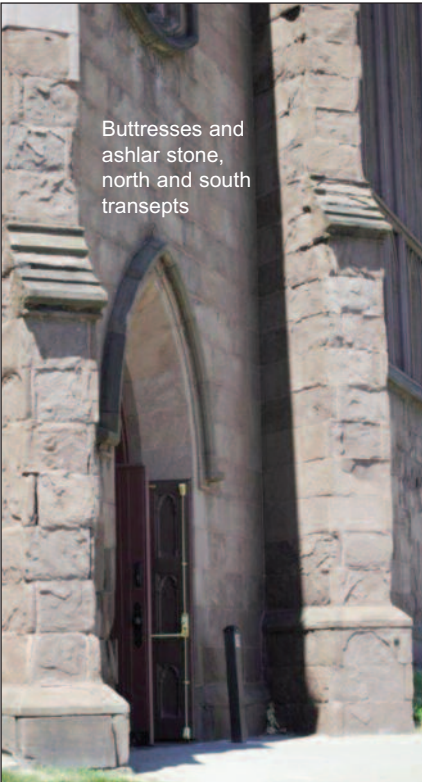


Day Chapel and vesting room

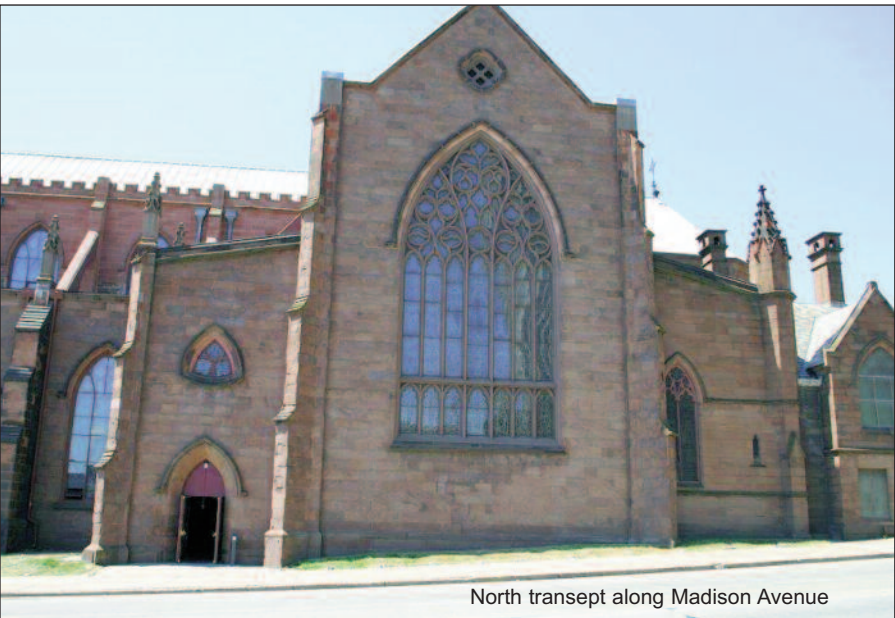
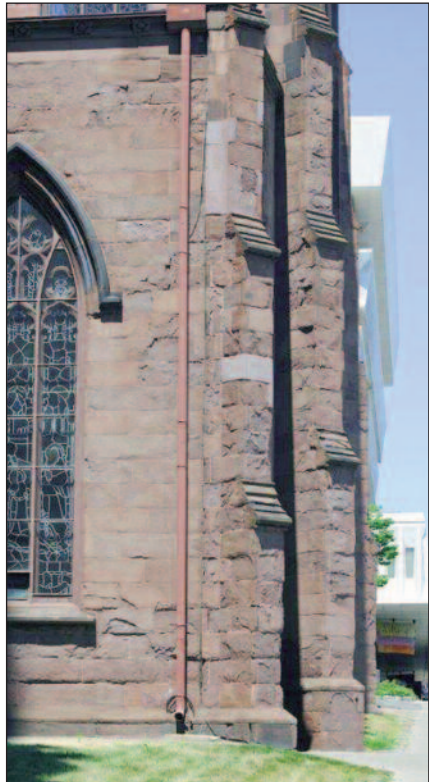


# FUTURE NEEDS

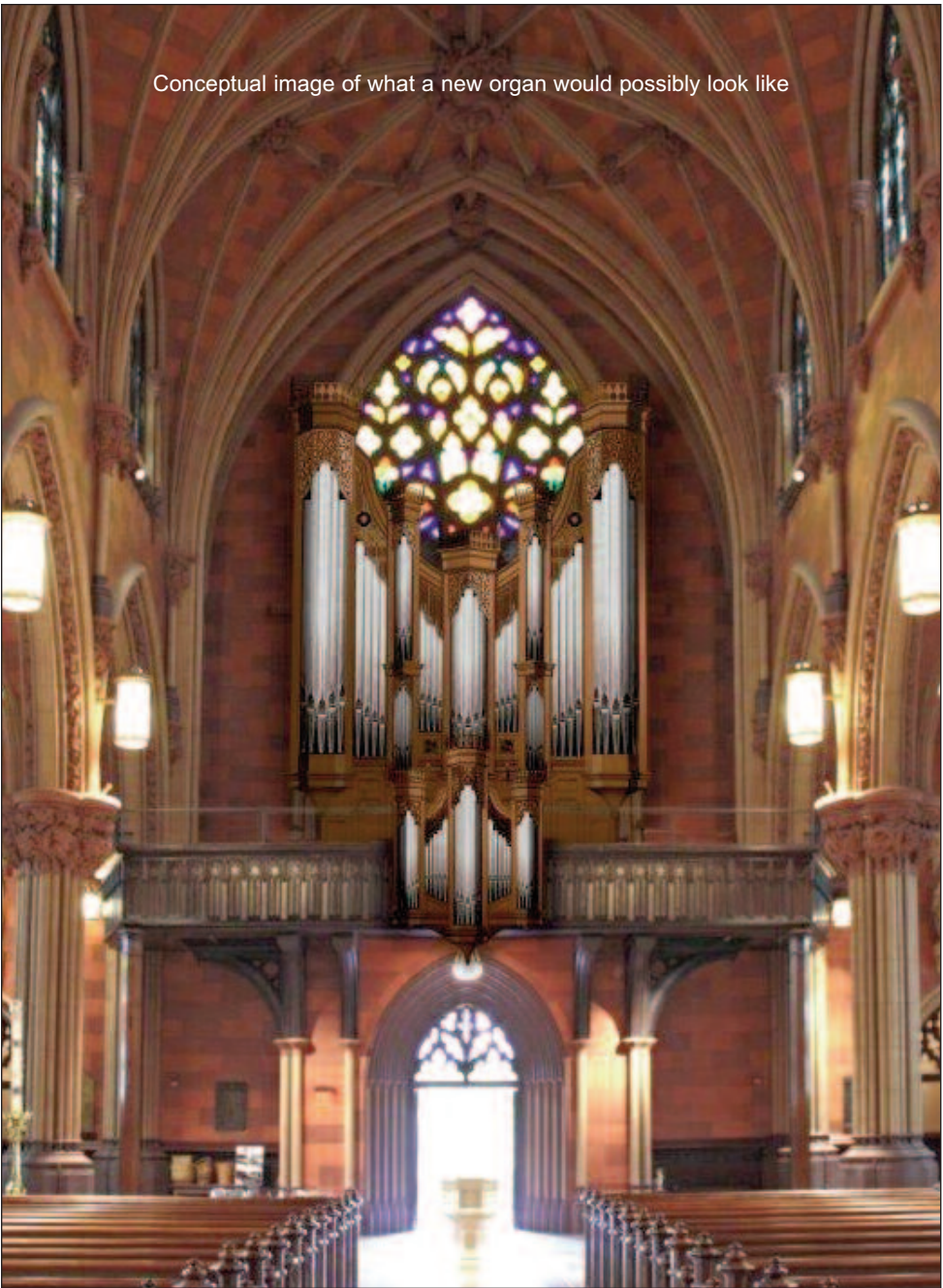
Future phases of Cathedral restoration are needed to address the continued deterioration of original brownstone surfaces. These include the South and North Transept and buttresses, the ashlar stone and buttresses on the east façade, and the south tower. Restoration of our historic Cathedral will address priority needs as funding permits.



Buttresses and ashlar stone, north and south transepts



North transept along Madison Avenue



Conceptual image of what a new organ would possibly look like

## The South Tower

The spire atop the South tower was built in 1888. It is in good condition as remediation work was done during the first phase of exterior stone restoration to address loose and spalling stone and repointing.

The South tower itself was completed in 1852. In 2004 it was clad in protective fabric sheathing as lack of funding did not permit replacing deteriorated stone, as was done to the North tower. Either new replacement sheathing or, ideally, complete stone replacement is required to ensure public safety from falling stone.

## Restoring the Voice of the Cathedral

The dedication of the Cathedral in 1852 saw the installation of a three-manual and pedal pipe organ built by the distinguished American organ builder Henry Erben. Some fifty-two feet high, thirty feet wide, and twenty feet deep, it contained forty two stops, three thousand pipes, and was built at the cost of \$8,000. "It has been pronounced by competent judges to be hitherto unsurpassed" declared the New York Times, of Oct. 29, 1852. In 1880 significant modifications to the organ were made including overhanging keys, additional notes for the swell and pedal keyboards, and a series of mechanical stop controls, state-of-the-art for the time. The instrument served the Cathedral well for over sixty years.

Significant modifications were made in 1880 and again in 1947. Residual damage from the construction of the nearby Empire State Plaza (1964-1976) rendered the organ essentially unplayable by the late-1970's. In 2009 during the interior restoration of the Cathedral, the organ and pipework was safely removed from the gallery and put in storage. Currently, a small, temporary electronic instrument is in use.

The Cathedral and Diocese now look to an exciting opportunity to replace the organ. Recommendations have been made by a select committee to seek proposals for a largely new instrument. With careful planning, a new instrument may even incorporate materials and pipe work from the original Cathedral organs. It would be a necessarily versatile instrument, capable of offering meditative music for intimate services; supporting a Cathedral filled with parishioners singing their favorite hymns; and rendering the wide range of organ music from the world's greatest composers.

Each year, the Cathedral hosts over 250 liturgies requiring music, from Christmas to Easter, weddings, funerals, ordinations, and holy days. A skilled organ builder and a robust plan on our part can realize an organ that will lift our minds and hearts to God in prayer, and which will last for generations to come, for the long life of the Cathedral.



Stained glass windows in Day Chapel  
Vandalized window with temporary opaque Plexiglas

Five windows require restoration by complete re-leading and new protective over-glaze.



Cathedral Restoration Corporation  
40 North Main Avenue  
Albany, NY 12203



## THE CATHEDRAL PARISH PRESERVATION PROJECT

### CATHEDRAL CLASSIC

20th Annual Golf Outing to Preserve Albany's Historic  
Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception

# SAVE THE DATE

**Date:**  
**Monday, June 25, 2018**

**Location:**  
**Wolferts Roost Country Club**



518.463.4447  
[www.cathedralic.com](http://www.cathedralic.com)

### Thank you for your continued support

Thanks to the generosity of faithful friends like you much has been accomplished in restoring our historic Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception. The continued well-being of the Cathedral and future phases of restoration will rely on our continued support and that of generations who come after us.

In addition to being Friends of the Cathedral, let us be Ambassadors for the Cathedral, bringing others to discover this sacred and spiritual house of God.

Please be sure to visit the new Cathedral website [www.cathedralic.com](http://www.cathedralic.com).

We thank you for your generosity and your prayers. Please stop in and visit when you are in the neighborhood. The Cathedral is truly your home!