

**MEMORIAL VOLUME OF THE ONE  
HUNDREDTH ANNIVERSARY  
CELEBRATION OF THE DEDICATION  
OF THE CHURCH OF THE HOLY  
CROSS. SEPTEMBER 29, 1803-1903**

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**THE NEW ENGLAND CATHOLIC HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

**MEMORIAL VOLUME OF THE ONE  
HUNDREDTH ANNIVERSARY  
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CROSS. SEPTEMBER 29, 1803-1903**



Interior of Franklin Street Cathedral  
New York, N.Y.  
1803  
Sketch by James Fitton  
1803



INTERIOR FRANKLIN STREET CATHEDRAL

"The church measured eighty feet in length and sixty feet in width. It was of the Ionic order and fronted on Franklin Square. . . . The entire cost of the building was twenty thousand dollars.

*It was dedicated by Most Rev. Bishop Carroll, September 29, 1803, with great solemnity and called the Church of the Holy Cross."*

From "Sketches of the Establishment of the Church in New England," by Rev. James Fitton.

1803 — September — 1903



MEMORIAL VOLUME

OF THE

One Hundredth Anniversary  
Celebration.

OF THE

**Dedication of the Church of the Holy Cross**

BOSTON



PUBLISHED BY

THE NEW ENGLAND CATHOLIC HISTORICAL SOCIETY

1904

IN GRATEFUL MEMORY

OF

**The Rt. Rev. Bishop, the Rev. Clergy  
and Faithful People**

AT THE DEDICATION OF HOLY CROSS CHURCH IN 1803

AND TO THE HONOR OF

**The Most Rev. Archbishop, the Rt. Rev. Bishops, the Rev. Clergy  
and Loyal People,**

AT THE CENTENARY FESTIVITIES, RELIGIOUS AND CIVIC

SEPTEMBER 27 AND 29, 1903.



"Let us now praise men of renown  
And our fathers in their generation.  
The Lord hath wrought great glory  
Through His Magnificence  
From the beginning.

Such as have borne rule in their dominions, men of great power, and endued with wisdom, showing forth in the prophets the dignity of prophets. And ruling over the present people, and by the strength of wisdom instructing the people in most holy words. Rich men in virtue, studying beautifulness, living at peace in their houses.

Let the people shew forth their wisdom,  
And the Church declare their praise."

*Ecclesiasticus XLIV:*

## INTRODUCTION.

THE great events in the historic progress of the "Kingdom of God" have ever been duly shown forth by anniversary festivals of prayer and speech and song, so that all generations may know of the deeds done by ancestors and of the blessings given by God.

The Prophet Moses, under Divine guidance, instituted anniversary days, King David created, under inspiration, the Songs of the Psalter, and King Solomon dedicated the great Temple of Jerusalem, all to keep alive and forever the great favors bestowed by God upon the chosen people of Israel, as exiles in Egypt, or wanderers at Mt. Sinai or conquering hosts in the Promised Land.

The Catholic Church, inspired by the Holy Spirit of God, has likewise written in letters of gold, upon the annals of the world, the miracles of Jerusalem, the triumphs in Greece, the conversion of imperial Rome, so that all men might know and see that the finger of God was truly guiding the eyes and hands and feet of the Apostles.

The Church in each Nation may likewise look back to its "first beginnings," to exalt its fathers in the faith, who planted the good seed, and to praise the men of renown for their worthy deeds of holiness and of valor. Thus did the whole Church of our beloved country celebrate, in 1889, the establishment of the first Episcopal See in the United States at the Mother Church of Baltimore, just one hundred years before.

Each daughter and descendant of that good Mother, will in turn look back to its own birth and infancy, to praise in fitting words the priests and people, who, under the grace of God, gave it being.

These Centenary celebrations are indeed met with here and there across the centuries, especially the Jubilee anniversaries, yet it was reserved for our own young and hopeful, grateful country, to take up with special zeal the "one hundredth" anniversary of every recorded noteworthy event from Bunker Hill to the end of time.

The spirit of the Church and the American spirit both reign, each supreme in its own sphere, in the hearts of Boston Catholics, hence, when the time was near at hand for the one hundredth anniversary of the dedication of the first Catholic Church built in Boston, in Massachusetts, and perhaps in New England, there was only one mind and one heart, to glorify God and exalt His Holy Church by celebrating in prayer and speech and song the most humble yet promising beginnings of a great and glorious monument, the Catholic Church of New England.

To whom must the honor of first proposing this Centenary festivity be given?

It is important, yet must remain one of those "historic mysteries" to be rewarded only in Heaven.

It was whispered around already in 1888, when the one hundredth anniversary of the "First Public Mass" in Boston was recalled, and among many other good results, stimulated no inconsiderable historic research into the ecclesiastical archives.



In 1902, while the Rev. Clergy were quietly offering the homage of reverence to the Most Rev. Archbishop, on his eightieth birthday anniversary, the Very Rev., now Rt. Rev. Mgr. Byrne, D.D., V.G., spoke the thought of many in suggesting that St. Michael's day, September 29, 1903, as the one hundredth anniversary of the dedication of "Holy Cross Church" on Franklin Street, Boston, should be made a bright festive occasion by the Catholics of the Archdiocese.

The Catholic Societies were eager to take up the idea, and the Catholic Union had decided upon a quiet social gathering, together with the erection of a bronze "Memorial Tablet" on the site of the old Holy Cross Church.

The New England Catholic Historical Society took the first formal action for a general Catholic celebration of so great an event. In June, 1903, at a regular meeting, upon the motion of the Hon. John F. Fitzgerald, it was voted to have a grand centennial celebration on September 29, 1903, and to ask the co-operation of all the Catholic Societies of the Archdiocese of Boston.

It was urged by some members that all "New England" Catholic Societies should be invited to share in Boston's glorious anniversary, but the brief interval of time and the well known fact that in 1908 would occur the one hundredth anniversary of the erection of Boston into an Episcopal See, with a celebration fitting that far more fruitful event, served to limit this festive occasion to the present Diocese, if not City of Boston.

A grand parade of all Catholic Societies was proposed as a fitting and public manifestation of growth, hence of glory to the Church. A banquet of 1000 most representative Catholics, ecclesiastics and laity, was also urged as very appropriate.

Many thought that a great public meeting, with a calm historic retrospect, with praise and thanksgiving in speech and poem and song, would be the most dignified manner of presenting the Church's growth and stature to the public.

The Catholic Societies, at a meeting of all the representatives, showed a fine spirit of unity and harmony to adopt any plan that might be proposed and approved by the Historical Society.

When the proposals had been fully discussed, and the wishes of His Grace, the Most Rev. Archbishop, had been obtained, it was decided, that together with the Solemn Mass of Thanksgiving at the Cathedral, already determined upon for the Sunday, September 27, the Historical Society should hold under its own auspices a great Catholic public meeting in Boston, on Tuesday evening, September 29, and should invite every other Catholic Society of the Archdiocese to send a delegation. The President of the Society was instructed to appoint all members of Committees, executive and special.

The available time was short, and all the members of committees gave their best efforts to organize and carry out the exercises in the most dignified manner, fitting the occasion and worthy of the Catholic Church of Boston. The spirit shown by the Society was soon shared by the Catholic people.

The Press, Catholic and secular, caught the true meaning of the anniversary, and gave long, appreciative notices of the original event and of the growth of the Church during one hundred years.

† A program of exercises for all the Catholic Schools of the Archdiocese was prepared by the Rev. Supervisor and approved by His Grace the Most Rev. Archbishop.

When the Sunday for the Mass at the Cathedral approached, the whole people of Boston seemed to be interested in the Catholic Centenary. On that day the *Boston Herald* issued a special finely illustrated eight page supplement in honor of the occasion, while *The Sunday Globe*, *The Saturday Traveler*, *Post*, *Journal* and *Transcript* all gave memorable and lengthy notices. The Catholic Press, namely *The Pilot*, *The Republic* and *The Sacred Heart Review*, proved their worth and high mission by setting forth in a fine Catholic spirit the full spiritual and temporal meaning of the festival.

The Sunday celebration at the new and imposing Holy Cross Cathedral, was indeed solemn and noteworthy for the true faithful children of the first pioneers, for the stranger, aye, even for the Puritan and Pilgrim, who all could follow back in historic fancy to the ceremony of the dedication of the little and first "Holy Cross" Church, one hundred years before.

The public civic Centenary exercises in Symphony Hall on Tuesday evening, September 29, surpassed the highest hopes of the Committee, who were its sponsors, and were truly a narrative of steady triumph during one hundred years of growth and a memorable outpouring of Catholic love and loyalty to the Church that was thus exalted, as the Kingdom of God upon earth.

To preserve the "whole history of the event" in documentary evidence for the edification of all Catholics, for the instruction of all earnest seekers after truth and for the worthy emulation and surpassing efforts of future generations unto the "Duocentenary" of 2003, the present memorial volume of documents is edited under the direction of the Centenary Committee on Press and Publication, and is herewith offered by the New England Catholic Historical Society to the

*Honor and Glory of God,*  
*and*  
*The Exaltation of the Catholic Church.*

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**THE TESTIMONY OF THE PRESS.**

THE significance of the anniversary commemorated in this volume, was at once perceived by the intelligent observers of the daily press, which fully and faith-



RT. REV. BISHOP CHEVERUS

fully chronicled the preliminary meetings of the Society as well as the different features of the celebration. Those of the papers which publish Sunday editions employed their larger opportunities in special articles, summarizing the notable events in the period reviewed and exhibiting the many-sided development of the