



ST. MARY'S CHURCH, NEWPORT

RHODE ISLAND'S FIRST ROMAN CATHOLIC PARISH
HONORED AS A NATIONAL HISTORIC SHINE

12 WILLIAM ST. NEWPORT, RI 02840 401-847-0475
WWW.STMARYNEWPORT.ORG

MEDIA ADVISORY

WHAT: Dismantling of St. Mary's Church massive 1,674-pipe organ to ship to Canada for restoration

WHERE: St. Mary's Church, 12 Williams Street, Newport, RI

WHEN: To schedule a media tour and interview, please contact Cody Meade, Director of Liturgical Music, at 401-239-8239 to schedule a media tour and interview.

WHY: After 58 years of non-stop service and glorious sound, St. Mary's Church monumental pipe organ is being disassembled, piece by piece, to be completely refurbished by its original builder, the Casavant Frères Company in Quebec, Canada. This is the first time since 1958 that the 1,674-pipe organ will be removed from the Church. Pipes range in size from one-half inch to 16 feet tall.

ABOUT ST. MARY'S CHURCH: St. Mary's Church was built in 1848. For two centuries, it has held a prominent place in Rhode Island's history as the state's first Roman Catholic Parish, and in American military history as the Church that served as the U.S. Navy Academy's chapel during the Civil War (1861-1865). The Church has gained international acclaim as the location where President John F. Kennedy (then Senator) married Jacqueline Lee Bouvier on September 12, 1953.

In 2008, it was named to the National Register of Historical Places. With its majestic landmark steeple and presence in Newport – a worldwide tourist destination – St. Mary's Church is an important part of our nation's heritage and the City of Newport's illustrious culture. Thousands of visitors come to St. Mary's throughout the year for liturgical services, and to admire its stunning architecture and 42 breathtaking stained glass windows or to attend special music events and performances by its choirs and guest musicians.

*The mission of St. Mary's Parish is to continue the work of Jesus Christ through
Worship, Education, Stewardship and Service*

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For Immediate Release

September 30, 2016

Contact: Cody Meade, Director of Liturgical Music
Phone: 401-239-8239 or Email: cw.mead@yahoo.com

“Timbres Away” as St. Mary’s Church Dismantles its Massive Pipe Organ for Restoration in Canada

Newport, RI – September 30, 2016 – After 58 years of non-stop service and glorious sound, St. Mary’s Church massive pipe organ is being dismantled for a trip to Quebec, Canada to be overhauled by its original builder, the Casavant Frères Company. This is the first time since the organ was installed in 1958 that the 1,674-pipe Casavant Op. 2462 will be removed from the Church.

“This spectacular instrument is as vital to St. Mary’s as are the columns or the roof to the church. It is truly a musical treasure that has graced our Church for nearly 60 years of weekly services, and thousands of weddings, baptisms, funerals, concerts and holiday liturgies,” said Pastor Kris von Maluski. “When the organ died on Christmas Eve in 2014, we knew it was time to make a full examination due to its age and apparent deterioration to ensure that we preserved its magnificence beyond its original splendor for the future.”

Refurbishing the organ must be done by hand, using historic techniques by skilled craftsmen at the Canadian company’s facility. In its absence, St. Mary’s will rebuild the choir loft space to ensure that upon the pipe organ’s return, the environment is structurally sound, aesthetically pleasing and perfectly matched with the Church’s remarkable and historic 188-year-old Gothic Revival architectural style. The choir loft rebuilding project will include revealing stained glass windows crafted in Austria that have been partially obscured for nearly 60 years. The entire project is expected to be finished by Easter Sunday of 2017.

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A celebration of the pipe organ and the contributions of St. Mary's music ministry to the church and community will be held at the 5:15 p.m. Mass on Saturday, Oct. 1, 2016. Under the direction of Cody Mead, Director of Liturgical Music, the Mass will feature special music and song by the St. Mary's Parish Choir and Youth Choir and guest singers. The public is invited to attend.

"The pipe organ of St. Mary's Church is a unique instrument of great beauty and an irreplaceable treasure. It is an accomplishment of sensitive musical design and detailed craftsmanship," said Cody Mead, Director of Liturgical Music. "As a testament to the skillful art and the history of organ building, the organ is an instrument of historic significance and has great value not only to the church but to the greater Newport community and beyond. This restoration gives us an exciting opportunity to preserve an important part of history, which still plays an active role in our lives to this day."

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Please contact Cody Meade, Director of Liturgical Music, at 401-239-8239 or email him at cw.mead@yahoo.com to schedule a media tour and interview. For more information about St. Mary's Church, please visit www.stmarynewport.org.

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