



## ST. MARY'S CHURCH, NEWPORT

*Rhode Island's First Roman Catholic Parish, 1828  
A National Historic Place, 2008*

For Immediate Release  
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### **St. Mary's Church Announces *Souls In Harmony* Campaign Committee to Spearhead a \$1.2M Preservation and Restoration Effort**

Newport, RI – January 17, 2017 – St. Mary's Church Pastor Kris von Maluski today announced the St. Mary's Church *Souls in Harmony* campaign leadership committee to spearhead a fundraising effort to raise \$1.2 million to preserve St. Mary's Church building and choir loft, restore its 1958 Casavant pipe organ and expand its music performance and education programs in the community.

Members of the leadership committee include Frank Furtado of Portsmouth and a member of the Parish Choir, David Kerins of Newport and a St. Mary's Parish Trustee, Maureen Maurer of Middletown and a member of the Parish Choir, Mary Beth MacBain of Portsmouth, David Leys of Middletown and a St. Mary's Parish Trustee, John Hirschboeck of Newport, Timothy O'Reilly of Portsmouth and a member of the St. Mary's Finance Committee and Robert Russell of Middletown and a member of the Parish Choir.

"We are honored and grateful to the distinguished members of our *Souls In Harmony* leadership committee for sharing their time and talent," said Father von Maluski. "With their guidance, we are very confident that our campaign will be a tremendous success. St. Mary's is a national treasure and landmark structure that is internationally recognized for its historic significance and stunning beauty. This preservation and restoration campaign is conducted with deep gratitude to generations of Rhode Islanders and Newport residents who have helped St. Mary's Church maintain its buildings and grounds for nearly two centuries and become known as among the most spectacular churches in the world."

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 fame 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 to appreciate and admire its stunning Gothic Revival architectural style and its 42 breathtaking stained glass windows or to enjoy special musical and choral events and performances by members of its choirs and guest musicians and instrumentalists.

St. Mary's Church *Souls In Harmony* fundraising campaign, which will also include applications to funding organizations for grants and matching gifts, include the following overarching goals:

- Preserve and protect the 188-year-old historic St. Mary's Church building to ensure the entire facility is structurally safe, and in keeping with the aesthetic and architectural integrity of the building in its entirety.
- Reconstruct and rehabilitate the Church's second level choir loft environment, which is part of the original building, in order to create a superior venue that is flexible and functional for multiple formations of musicians and instruments.
- Refurbish and restore the Church's nearly 60-year-old Casavant pipe organ by the Casavant Frères of Quebec, Canada, the company that built and installed the original instrument in 1958.
- Expand the Church's music program and community performance events and music education programs.

For more information about the St. Mary's Church *Souls In Harmony* campaign events, giving levels and to donate online, visit [www.stmarynewport.org](http://www.stmarynewport.org), or contact Father von Maluski at 401-847-0475 or [stmarynewport@aol.com](mailto:stmarynewport@aol.com), or Cody Mead, Director of Liturgical Music, at 401-239-8239 or [cw.mead@yahoo.com](mailto:cw.mead@yahoo.com).