

Form 10-300  
(July 1969)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM**

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: Maryland	
COUNTY: St. Mary's	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

**1. NAME**

COMMON: St. Francis Xavier Church and Newtown Manor House Historic District

AND/OR HISTORIC: St. Francis Xavier Roman Catholic Church & Newtown Manor House

**2. LOCATION**

STREET AND NUMBER: Newtown Neck, east side of Md. Rt. 243, 1.5 mi. south of Compton

CITY OR TOWN: Compton

STATE: Maryland COOF: 24 COUNTY: St. Mary's CODE: 037

**3. CLASSIFICATION**

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress	Yes: <input type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Agricultural	<input type="checkbox"/> Government	<input type="checkbox"/> Park	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation	<input type="checkbox"/> Comments
<input type="checkbox"/> Commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> Industrial	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private Residence	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Educational	<input type="checkbox"/> Military	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Religious	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	_____	_____

**4. OWNER OF PROPERTY**

OWNER'S NAME: Archdiocese of Washington  
Contact: Patrick Cardinal A. O'Boyle

STREET AND NUMBER: 1721 Rhode Island Avenue, N. W.

CITY OR TOWN: Washington STATE: Maryland CODE: 11  
Dist. of Columbia

**5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.: Hall of Records

STREET AND NUMBER: St. John's College Campus, College Avenue

CITY OR TOWN: Annapolis STATE: Maryland COOF: 24

**6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE OF SURVEY: Maryland Register of historic sites and landmarks

DATE OF SURVEY: 1971     Federal     State     County     Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS: Maryland Historical Trust

STREET AND NUMBER: 94 College Avenue

CITY OR TOWN: Annapolis STATE: Maryland CODE: 24

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

STATE: Maryland  
COUNTY: St. Mary's  
ENTRY NUMBER: \_\_\_\_\_  
FOR NPS USE ONLY

7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

St. Francis Xavier Church and Newtown Manor House Historic District, supported by 700 acres of farmland one hundred yards to the southeast, is located on Newtown Neck on the east side of Maryland Route 243, 1.5 mile south of Compton, Maryland.

St. Francis Xavier Church is a frame, rectangular building with two octagonally-shaped brick additions: one on the northwest (entrance); a second addition on the southeast (altar). The southeast addition is broader than the main body of the church and protrudes several inches beyond the exterior walls of the main block of the church. This southeast addition has three rectangular windows--each one in a separate plane of the octagon. The end plane is a blank brick wall with a brick chimney rising above the roof. On each side of this chimney is a dormer window. There is a door in the southeast octagon, the plane which is parallel to the southwest wall of the main body of the church.

The roof over the altar is several inches higher than the A-shaped nave roof which continues at the same level and terminates at a cupola marking the apex of the roof of the northwest octagon. This entrance is narrower than the breadth of the church so that the nave protrudes several feet from the place where the addition joins the main body. This end is two stories and has rectangular windows on each story on each visible exterior plane with the exception of the door on the first story at the end plane. A sacristy and confessional are located inside.

The main body of the church has an interior barrel vault ceiling supported by two sets of piers which create the nave and side aisles. There is a dome over the chancel and altar which is located in the southeast octagonal end. The church has simple Federal woodwork and a mid-eighteenth-century reredos.

Newtown Manor House, one hundred yards to the southeast of the church, is a two-and-one-half story brick, five-bay house with a pair of enclosed chimneys on each gable end. The structure has an A roof with a jerkinhead at each end. There is a centrally placed porch on both the northeast and southwest elevations. The house sits on a high brick basement. There is a long one-story, shed-like structure along the northwest gable end.

Newtown Manor House originally had a gambrel roof which was raised and changed to its present shape in 1816.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**3. SIGNIFICANCE**

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- |  |                                       |  |                                       |
|--|---------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Columbian | <input type="checkbox"/> 16th Century | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 18th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 20th Century |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 15th Century  | <input type="checkbox"/> 17th Century | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 19th Century |                                       |

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) **1766-7 (church), c. 1740 (house);**

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- |  |                                      |   |   |
|--|--------------------------------------|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal              | <input type="checkbox"/> Education   | <input type="checkbox"/> Political                      | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric             | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic                | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry    | <input type="checkbox"/> Science                        | <u>17th century</u>                                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture             | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention   | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture                      | <u>Maryland history</u>                             |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape   | <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian            | _____   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature  | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater                        | _____   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce                | <input type="checkbox"/> Military    | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation                 | _____   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications          | <input type="checkbox"/> Music       |   | _____   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation            |                                      |   | _____   |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

**ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE**

The St. Francis Xavier Church building has a barrel vault ceiling, unusual in a wood church. Architectural evidence indicates this vaulting is original (1767). The two octagonally-shaped brick ends are unusual, if not unique, features in Maryland ecclesiastical architecture.

**HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE**

St. Francis Xavier Church and Newtown Manor House Historic District marks a location and site important in the seventeenth-century ecclesiastical history of Maryland. From this area of Newtown Neck and from other locations in Southern Maryland and the Eastern Shore, English Jesuit priests conducted missionary activities among the Indians and ministered to the needs of the settlers beginning in the 1630's and 1640's. In Maryland, as all over North America, the Jesuits were the vanguard of western civilization in the wilderness.

The combination of St. Francis Xavier Church and Newtown Manor House properties is an example of a self-contained Jesuit community made self-supporting by the surrounding 700 acre farm. This type of community was prevalent in the eighteenth century. In 1668 the Jesuits purchased the Manor of Little Bretton, covering all of Newtown Neck. The income from the farm supported the Jesuits and their activities. The actual farm work was usually done by tenants and overseers. This tradition has continued to the present day.

Jesuit activity at Newtown dates back to the 1640's. In 1649 the mission in this locale became formally established. The first church was erected in 1662 after a relaxation of the discrimination against Catholics which accompanied the Restoration. The site of the 1662 church is believed to be in St. Francis Xavier Cemetery, about one-third mile to the north.

SEE CONTINUATION SHEET # 2

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Recorders: Michael Bourne, Maryland Historical Trust, 94 College Avenue, Annapolis, Maryland 21401; Nancy Miller, Historian, Maryland Historical Trust.

Beitzell, Edwin W., "A History of St. Francis Xavier Roman Catholic Church (Old Newtown) The Manor of Little Bretton St. Mary's County, Maryland." n. p., 1962, Files of the Maryland Historical Trust.

SEE CONTINUATION SHEET #1

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees	Minutes	Seconds
NW	38° 15' 23"	76° 42' 05"				
NE	38° 15' 23"	76° 41' 55"				
SE	38° 15' 15"	76° 41' 55"				
SW	38° 15' 15"	76° 42' 05"				

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: sixteen (16) acres

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE:  
Mrs. Preston Parish, Keeper of the Maryland Register

ORGANIZATION: Maryland Historical Trust      DATE: Jan. 12, 1972

STREET AND NUMBER:  
94 College Avenue

CITY OR TOWN: Annapolis      STATE: Maryland      CODE: 24

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National  State  Local

Name: Orlando Ridout IV

Title: State Liaison Officer for Maryland

Date: January 13, 1972

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

ATTEST: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Keeper of The National Register

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

STATE	Maryland	
COUNTY	St. Mary's	
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(Continuation Sheet) #1

(Number all entries)

St. Francis Xavier Church & Newtown Manor House Historic District

#7. DESCRIPTION continued

A fragment of a brick wall, located near the house, is under archaeological investigation by the St. Mary's County Archaeological Society.

#8. SIGNIFICANCE continued

Newtown flourished in the last decades of the seventeenth century while it was the county seat as well as a religious center. After 1695, when the county seat moved, the area played a diminishing roll in the life of overall St. Mary's County. The decline was culminated in 1868 when Leonardtown became the residence of the Jesuit priests.

St. Francis Xavier Church, as a parish church, has continued since its origin in the mid-seventeenth century to minister to the needs of local Roman Catholics.

Local tradition maintains that St. Francis Xavier Church is the oldest Roman Catholic church building in the English colonies.

In 1956 the church received the Haddock Chalice which had belonged to James Haddock, a resident of Newtown from 1699 to about 1704. Haddock had taken the small vessel with him when he left; one of his descendants returned it to the church.

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(Continuation Sheet) ~~#~~ 2

STATE	SM-383	
COUNTY		
FOR NPS USE ONLY		
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE	

(Number all entries)

St. Francis Xavier Church & Newtown Manor House Historic District

#9. REFERENCES continued

Filteau, Jerome. National Catholic News Service, U. S. Catholic Conference, Washington, D. C., April 26, 1971. One of a few Pennsylvania Roman Catholic Churches may predate St. Francis Xavier as the oldest Catholic Church in continuous existence in the thirteen English colonies.

St. Mary's County Land Records. Hall of Records, Annapolis, Maryland.

Federal Direct Tax Assessment 1798. St. Mary's County. Hall of Records, Annapolis, Maryland.



LEONARDTOWN QUADRANGLE  
 USGS 7.5 minute map (Maryland)  
 scale: 1:24,000  
 1963

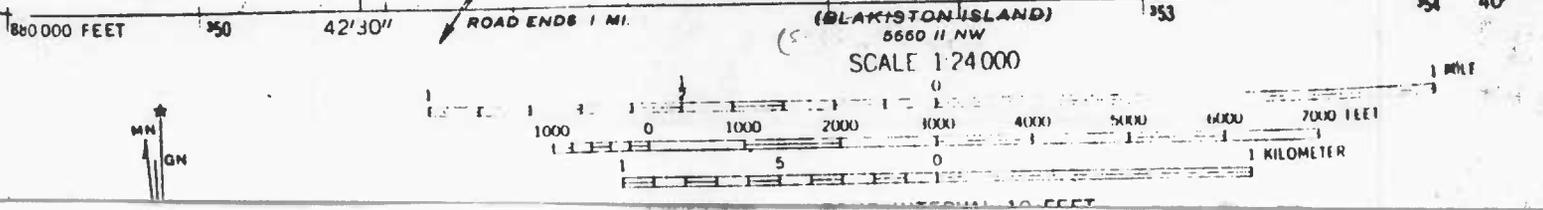
lat.  $38^{\circ} 15' 23''$   
 long.  $76^{\circ} 42' 05''$

lat.  $38^{\circ} 15' 23''$   
 long.  $76^{\circ} 41' 55''$

**SM-383**  
 ST. FRANCIS XAVIER  
 CHURCH and NEWTOWN  
 MANOR HOUSE

lat.  $38^{\circ} 15' 15''$   
 long.  $76^{\circ} 42' 05''$

lat.  $38^{\circ} 15' 15''$   
 long.  $76^{\circ} 41' 55''$



SM-383

