

Easement

B-61  
MAG #0400612408

Form 10-300  
(Rev. 6-72)

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:	Baltimore City
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY DATE:	

1. NAME

COMMON:  
St. Vincent de Paul Roman Catholic Church

AND/OR HISTORIC:

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:  
120 North Front Street

CITY OR TOWN:  
Baltimore

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT:  
Third

STATE: Maryland CODE: 24 COUNTY: Baltimore City CODE: 510

3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	Yes: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input type="checkbox"/> No
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Park <input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____ _____

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME:  
Roman Catholic Archbishop of Baltimore

STREET AND NUMBER:  
320 Cathedral Street

CITY OR TOWN:  
Baltimore

STATE: Maryland CODE: 24

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.: Liber: ED 61 Folio: 86

Land Record Office of the Superior Court of Baltimore City

STREET AND NUMBER:  
Room 610, Baltimore City Court House

CITY OR TOWN:  
Baltimore

STATE: Maryland CODE: 24

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:  
Commission for Historical and Architectural Preservation

DATE OF SURVEY: 1965  Federal  State  County  Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:  
Commission for Historical and Architectural Preservation

STREET AND NUMBER:  
402 City Hall

CITY OR TOWN:  
Baltimore

STATE: Maryland CODE: 24

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

STATE: Maryland  
COUNTY: Baltimore City  
FOR NPS USE ONLY  
ENTRY NUMBER  
DATE

7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input 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

The chief distinctive feature of St. Vincent de Paul Church at 120 N. Front Street, is its slender Georgian style tower which rises to a height of 150 feet above the narthex and contrasts sharply with its surroundings. This unique brick tower, painted gleaming white as is the entire building, rests on an octagonal base and supports three successive indented tiers (one octagonal and two cylindrical), capped by a copper-sheathed dome and twelve-foot cross. In style, the building relates to the classical revival churches built in London and Paris in the 1820's, and, although no architect can be ascribed, the restrained exterior pilasters and mouldings of Georgian influence are very much in the tradition of the carpenter-draftsman as practiced by John Hall of Baltimore during the early Nineteenth Century.

The front facade is divided into three bays by double engaged pilasters. Each bay contains a doorway - the central one topped by a triangular stone pediment and each of the flanking doors by flat stone lintels. Over the doorways are arched windows at the second story level, except that the central bay contains a niche with a statue of St. Vincent. There is a similar arched window in the pediment above. A steep flight of stairs leading from the street crosses the entire front facade.

The side elevation contains six bays each with a large arched window similar to those in front and separated by single engaged pilasters.

Just below the roof cornice is a frieze of gilded swags placed at regular intervals around the entire building above each pilaster.

The interior contains a deep sloping gallery on three sides and the appointments are simple and details modest. The sanctuary was added at a later date. In 1873, Father Didier, the seventh pastor, had a new organ installed and in 1883 he had fourteen inscribed bells cast by Henry McShow of Baltimore placed in the tower.

The church is located on the east side of the Jones Falls in a section known as Old Town. It presents an interesting contrast with the aging brick industrial and commercial structures nereby, especially the Shot Tower immediately to the south. It will relate visually to the Historic Park which is planned for the area stretching southward to the waterfront. In addition, it is at present a dramatic termination of the view east from the modern Charles Center, down Lexington Street and past the City Hall and War Memorial Plaza.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

8. SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- Pre-Columbian
- 15th Century
- 16th Century
- 17th Century
- 18th Century
- 19th Century
- 20th Century

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) 1840-1841

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- |   |   |   |  |
|---|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal     | <input checked="" 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/Phi- | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic       | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry             | osophy  | <u>Architecture</u>                      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture    | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention            | <input type="checkbox"/> Science                  | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Architecture   | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape            | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture                | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art            | <input type="checkbox"/> Architecture         | <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Human-            | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce       | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature           | itarian   | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications | <input type="checkbox"/> Military             | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater                  | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation   | <input type="checkbox"/> Music                | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation           | _____                                    |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The congregation of St. Vincent de Paul Roman Catholic Church was established in 1840 under Father John Baptist Gildea. The priest himself is credited with designing the building which was the fifth Roman Catholic church constructed in Baltimore. It was to serve the ever increasing, wealthy, English-speaking Catholics in the Gay and Pratt Street area.

On May 21, 1840, the cornerstone was laid by Archbishop Eccleston and the Right Reverend John English of Charleston, South Carolina, gave the rain-interrupted address. When the church was dedicated on November 7, 1841, the parish already extended from the harbor to Towson. By 1865, the church was over-crowded; reputedly there were at times 2,000 families in the congregation. In 1879 the church was consecrated by Archbishop James Gibbons, one of four churches so recongnized in America. This placed it under the direct protection of the Holy See.

During the years that followed, the church became known for its "Printers' Mass" which was held at midnight and attended regularly by newsmen from the two newspaper offices nearby. There was, in addition, a male orphanage adjoining and parochial schools operated by the Christian Brothers and the Sisters of Charity.

The parish's most famous son was James Cardinal Gibbons (1834-1921). The founder, Father Gildea, was interred beneath the main altar at his death February 14, 1845.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

. Art and Architecture in St. Vincent de Paul Church, Baltimore, Md. (Baltimore: Frank T. Cimino Co., 1943).

Scharf, J. Thomas. History of Baltimore City and County, Maryland. (Baltimore: Louis H. Everts, 1881). p. 537

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 Degrees Minutes Seconds	LONGITUDE Degrees Minutes Seconds		LATITUDE Degrees Minutes Seconds	LONGITUDE Degrees Minutes Seconds	
NW	° ' "	° ' "		39 ° 17 ' 28.5 "	76 ° 36 ' 23.5 "	
NE	° ' "	° ' "				
SE	° ' "	° ' "				
SW	° ' "	° ' "				

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY:

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

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE:  
W. Boulton Kelly, Ellen H. Kelly, and Catharine F. Black

ORGANIZATION: Comm. for Historical and Architectural Preservation      DATE: Jan. 30, 1973

STREET AND NUMBER:  
402 City Hall

CITY OR TOWN: Baltimore      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: Jan. 16, 1974

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

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

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

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

ATTEST:

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

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

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
PROPERTY PHOTOGRAPH FORM**

(Type all entries - attach to or enclose with photograph)

<b>1. NAME</b>		
COMMON	AND/OR HISTORIC	NUMERIC CODE (Assigned by NPS)
St. Vincent de Paul Roman Catholic Church		
<b>2. LOCATION</b>		
STATE	COUNTY	TOWN
Maryland	Baltimore City	Baltimore
STREET AND NUMBER		
120 North Front Street		
<b>3. PHOTO REFERENCE</b>		
PHOTO CREDIT	DATE	NEGATIVE FILED AT
Filip Sibley	1969	402 City Hall, Baltimore, Md Comm. for Historical and Architectural Preservation
<b>4. IDENTIFICATION</b>		
DESCRIBE VIEW, DIRECTION, ETC.		

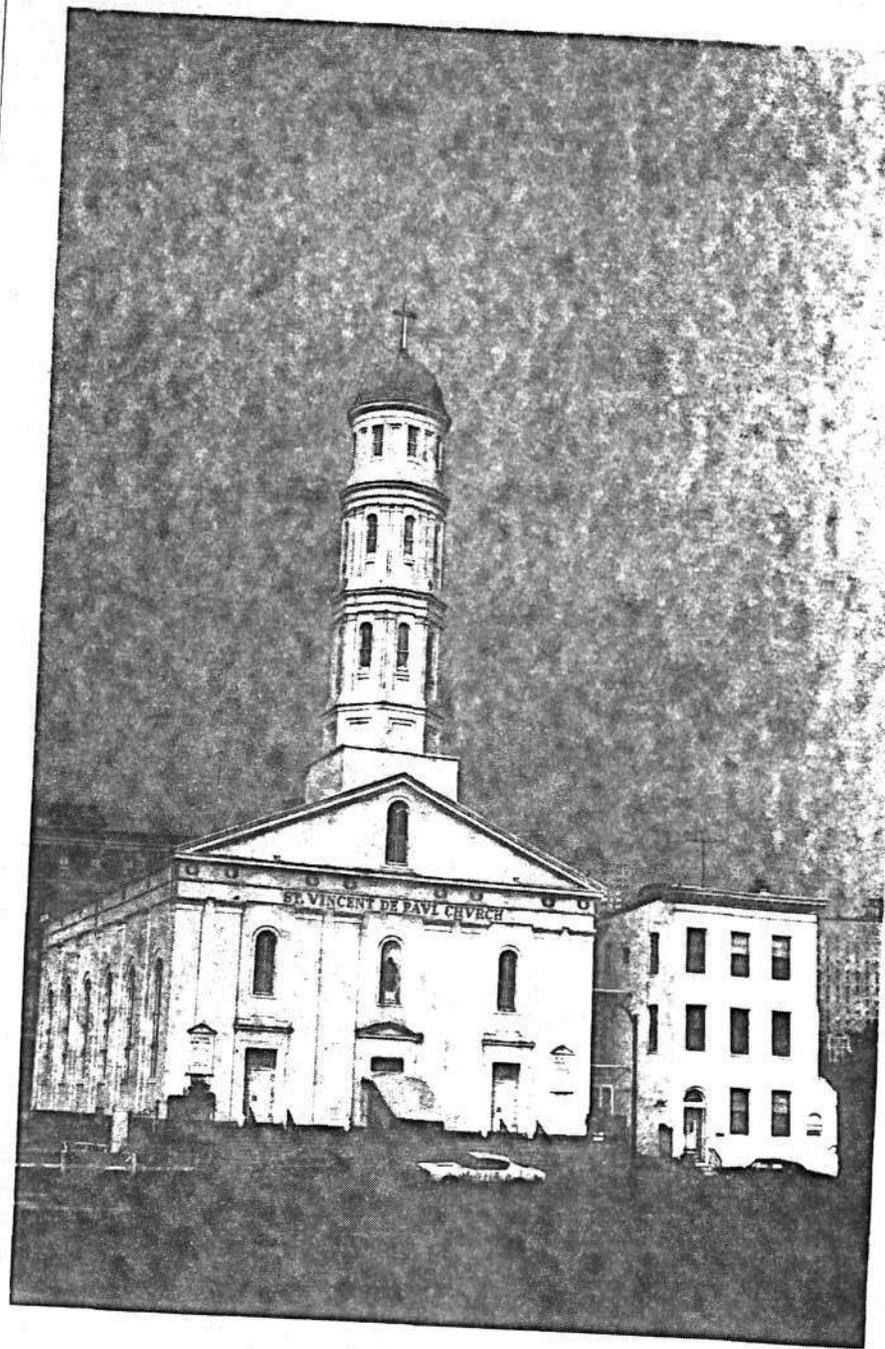
St. Vincent de Paul Church from the east

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
PROPERTY MAP FORM**

(Type all entries - attach to or enclose with map)

<b>1. NAME</b>		
COMMON	AND/OR HISTORIC	NUMERIC CODE (Assigned by NPS)
St. Vincent de Paul Roman Catholic Church		
<b>2. LOCATION</b>		
STATE	COUNTY	TOWN
Maryland	Baltimore City	Baltimore
STREET AND NUMBER		
120 North Front Street		
<b>3. MAP REFERENCE</b>		
SOURCE	DATE	SCALE
U.S.G.S. 7 1/2' quadrangle Baltimore East	1953 Photorevised 1966	1:24,000

REQUIREMENTS: PROPERTY BOUNDARIES, WHERE REQUIRED, AND NORTH ARROW.



B-61

17°30"

4350

4348

4347

520 000  
FEET

4346

39°15'  
76°37'30"

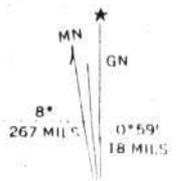


B-61

BALTIMORE EAST QUADRANGLE  
 USGS 7.5 minute map  
 scale: 1: 24 000  
 1953 photorevised 1966

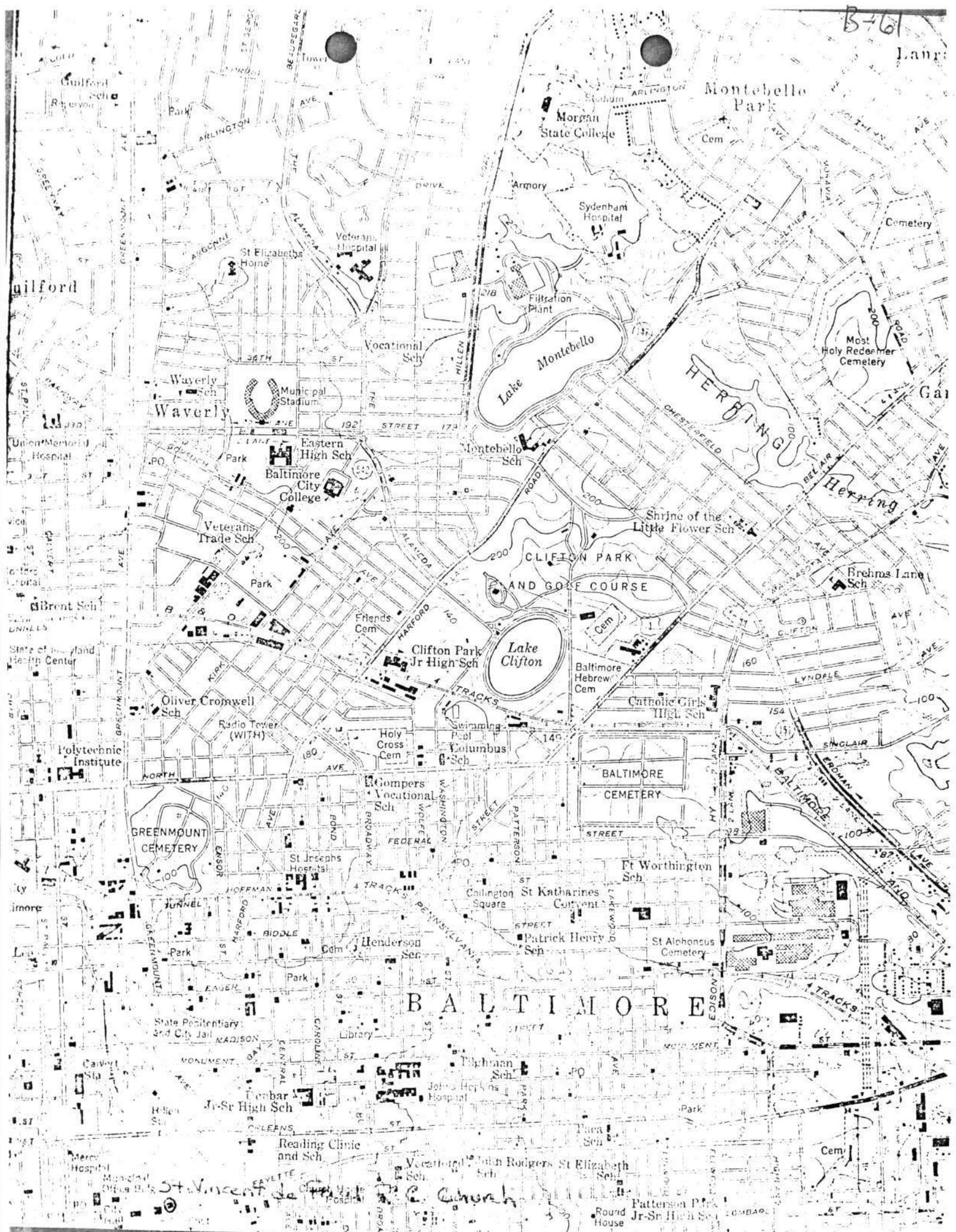
Mapped by the Army Map Service  
 Edited and published by the Geological Survey  
 Control by USGS, USC&GS, USCE, and City of Baltimore  
 Topography from aerial photographs by photogrammetric  
 methods. Aerial photographs taken 1943. Field checked 1944  
 Culture revised by the Geological Survey 1953  
 Hydrography compiled from USC&GS Chart 545 (1951)

(RELAY)  
 5662 II NW



B-61

Lang



BALTIMORE

HERBING

Waverly

Lake Montebello

Lake Clifton

GREENMOUNT CEMETERY

BALTIMORE CEMETERY

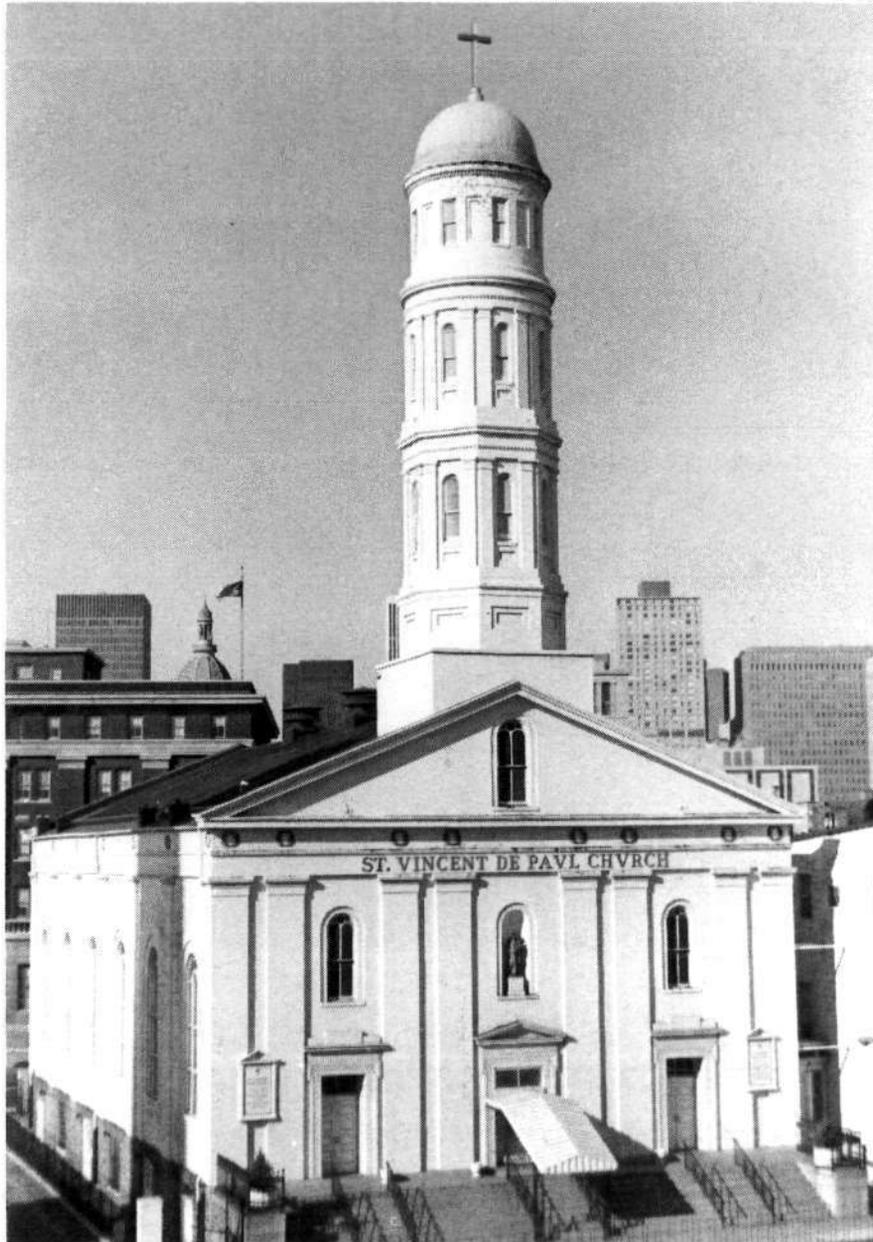
State Penitentiary and City Jail

St. Vincent's Hospital

C. Church

Patterson Park Jr-Sr High Sch

B-61  
ST. VINCENT DE PAUL CHURCH  
Baltimore City



# Easement

B-61

ST. VINCENT DE PAUL CHURCH  
Baltimore City

**NAME** St. Vincent de Paul Church

**LOCATION** 120 North Front Street  
Baltimore, Maryland

**ARCHITECT**

**DATES** 1841

**OWNER** Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Baltimore

From November 7, 1841, until the present, St. Vincent de Paul Church has been a major visual landmark in Baltimore. Its white tower loomed prominently in the 19th-century skyline of that part of the city east of Jones Falls known as "Old Town," and as such was easily visible from the harbor by all the ships in that busy era. It was the sole survivor of the razing by Urban Renewal Programs in the late 1950's, making it at the time even more visible in the middle of cleared land. The tower has always punctuated the view eastward from George Frederick's City Hall across the City Hall Plaza. It now dramatically terminates the view eastward from the new Charles Center Project on Lexington Street.

Although St. Vincent de Paul Church is a major visual landmark, architecturally it is relatively modest in the academic sense, i.e., the consideration of interior space and the quality of the detail. The sturdy, painted-brick classical revival structure supports a three-tier white tower which rises to a height of 150 feet directly over the narthex. The tower, the silhouette of which has always dominated the east bank of the Jones Falls, relates in style to the classical revival churches built in London and Paris in the 1820's.

This unique white brick tower rests on an octagonal base and supports three successive indented tiers (one octagonal and two cylindrical) capped by a copper-sheathed dome supporting a twelve-foot cross. The restrained exterior pilasters and mouldings of Georgian influence are very much in the tradition of the profession of carpenter-draftsmen as practiced by John Hall of Baltimore at that time.

[continued]

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ST. VINCENT DE PAUL CHURCH  
Baltimore City

page two

The interior contains a deep sloping gallery on three sides of the church which is simply appointed. The sanctuary was added at a later date. In 1873, Father Didier, the seventh pastor, had a new organ installed. and in 1883, he had fourteen inscribed bells cast by Henry McShow of Baltimore placed in the tower.

St. Vincent de Paul, the fifth Catholic Church to be built in Baltimore, is one of the few surviving early Catholic parish churches remaining in this city. In 1839, Father John Baptist Gildea proposed the need for a new church on the east bank of the Jones Falls. It was to serve the ever increasing, wealthy, English-speaking Catholics in the central Gay and Pratt Street area. Father Gildea and a group of prominent men expedited the building of this church after Archbishop Samuel Eccleston had approved it.

On May 21, 1840, the now-lost cornerstone was laid by Archbishop Eccleston and others. Right Reverend John England of Charleston, South Carolina, gave the rain-interrupted address. When the church was dedicated on November 7, 1841, the parish extended from the harbor to Towson. By 1865, the church was over-crowded. Reputedly there were at times 2,000 families in the congregation. In 1879, the church was consecrated by Archbishop James Gibbons, one of four churches so recognized in America. This placed it under the direct protection of the Holy See.

St. Vincent de Paul's most famous son was James Cardinal Gibbons. There is a long list of distinguished rectors, including Father Martin and the present pastor, Father Stroup, who unearthed and printed the history of the church.

The church membership declined considerably with the suburban movement and changes in land use. However, Father Stroup has indicated that the adjacent housing projects and the new Inner Harbor housing could reverse this trend.

Ellen H. Kelly  
W. Boulton Kelly  
Commission for Historical &  
Architectural Preservation  
August 1971

B-61 ✓

Catholic Center  
320 Cathedral Street  
Baltimore, Maryland 21201

OCT 5 1971

Office of the Archbishop

September 29, 1971

Mr. Russell V. Keune, AIA  
Director, Field Services  
National Trust for Historic Preservation  
740-748 Jackson Place, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20006

Dear Mr. Kuene:

Immaculate Conception Church, Baltimore

When I returned from a brief trip to Rome, I received your letter of September 14 concerning certain properties which are or were held in the name of the Archdiocese of Baltimore.

In regard to Immaculate Conception Church, located at Division and Mosher Streets, Baltimore, I wish to inform you that on February 10 of this year that church was conveyed by the Congregation of the Mission of St. Vincent dePaul to Provident Hospital, Incorporated. The action was taken after intensive studies were made of the health needs of the population in the vicinity of the church. In one such study, dated July 25, 1969, the Upton Planning Committee reported as follows:

"We have found that health problems in this area are extremely acute, and...health facilities are lacking. In this area, the tuberculosis rate is perhaps one of the highest in the nation. Maternal and infant care programs are sorely needed in this area. Dental programs are also very badly needed. We do not have enough physicians to cover the needs of the people in this area.

"Based on national studies and the resulting information, we wholeheartedly endorse the concept of the Neighborhood Health Center as described to us. We have further studied the available sites and find the Immaculate Conception Property at Division and Mosher Streets as outlined by you the only available site. We therefore feel that the best possible use for the Immaculate Conception Church would be for the health center."

Mr. Russell V. Keune, AIA

September 29, 1971

Based upon a number of surveys and studies similar to the one quoted, the Archdiocese of Baltimore and the Vincentian Fathers concluded that any opposition on their part to making the church available for the health care of the population would be interpreted as a sign of lack of interest if not of outright indifference to community needs. Consequently, the property transfer was agreed to and ultimately effected.

It would seem that if efforts are to be made to forestall the proposed demolition planned by Provident Hospital, it will be necessary that your organization contact the officers and trustees of that institution, since neither the Archdiocese nor the Vincentian Fathers have any further legal or equitable interest.

With respect to your suggestion that the Archdiocese give appropriate consideration to supporting a comprehensive inventory and evaluation of the Church's historic property in Baltimore City, I assure you of our interest. I regret, however, that our deteriorating financial position-- as evidenced by a cash deficit of \$1,700,000 for the present fiscal year-- is such that we cannot utilize funds for any but our most pressing needs.

We would hope that those private organizations which interest themselves in the preservation of architectural and historical edifices might assist the Church in meeting the annual operating deficits which unfortunately characterize the operations of the majority of our inner-city complexes. Our unfortunate financial situation with respect to these properties has been such that funds are insufficient for operation and virtually non-existent for maintenance. With the advent of considerable pressure to remove these church properties from the tax-exempt rolls, we face still an additional burden in continuing their upkeep.

I assure you that I share your concern for the future of these properties, and that I look with favor upon all efforts to assist the Church in finding additional sources of revenue to meet the problem on a long-term basis.

Sincerely yours,

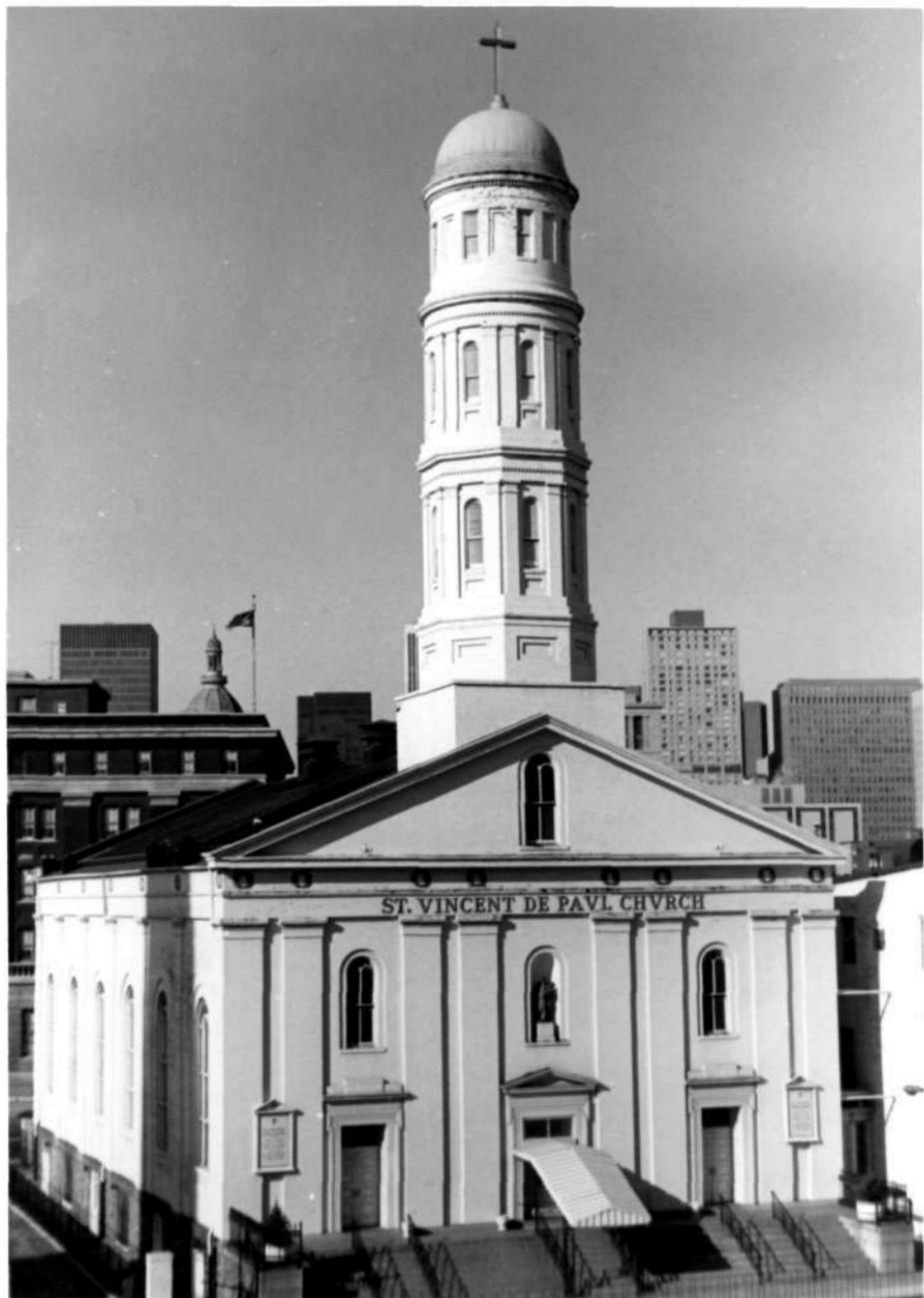
*Lawrence Cardinal Shehan*

Archbishop of Baltimore

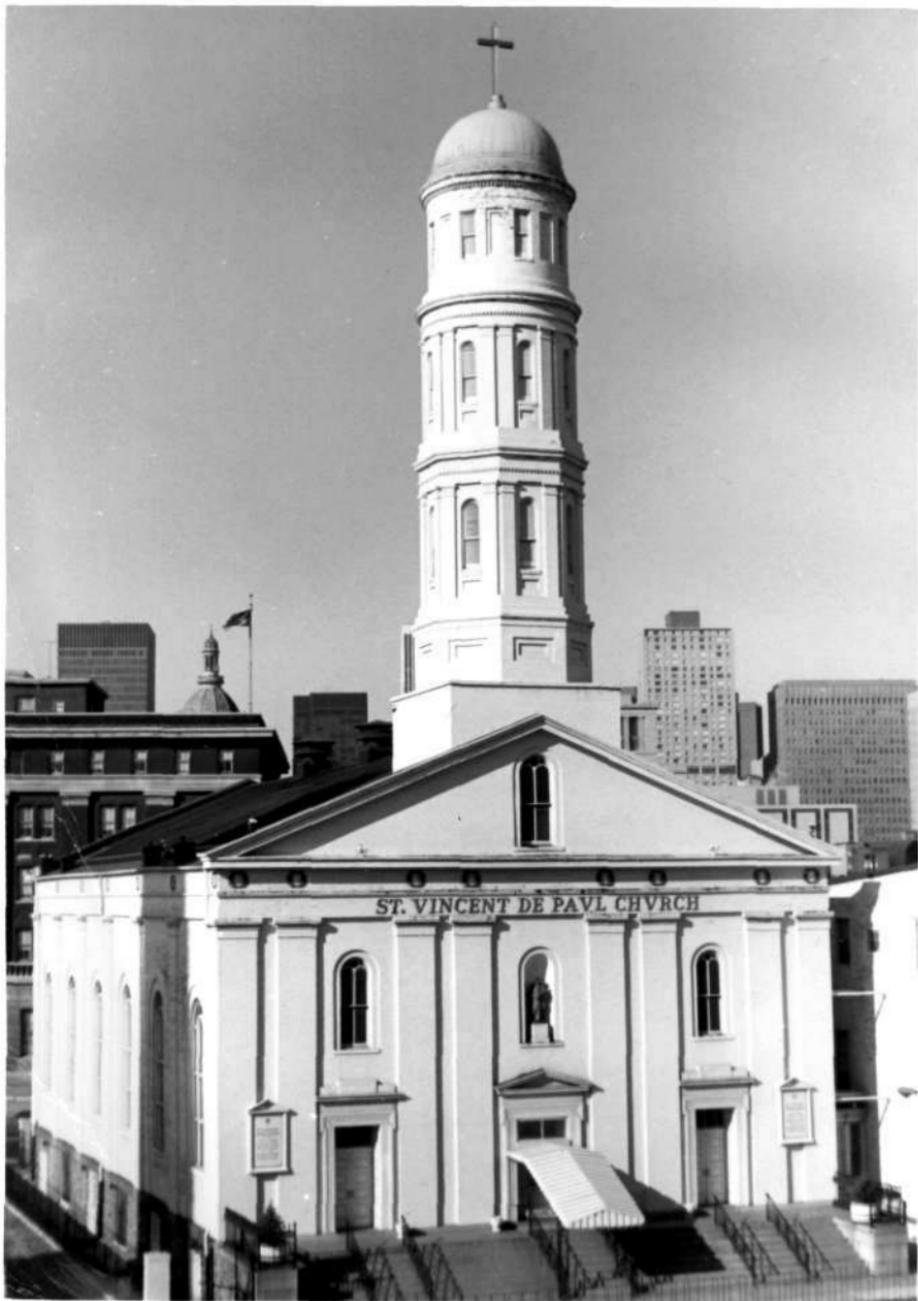
RECEIVED

OCT 15 1971

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST



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