

Good News

Bringing the Light of Christ to Missouri | November/December 2020



History Restored!

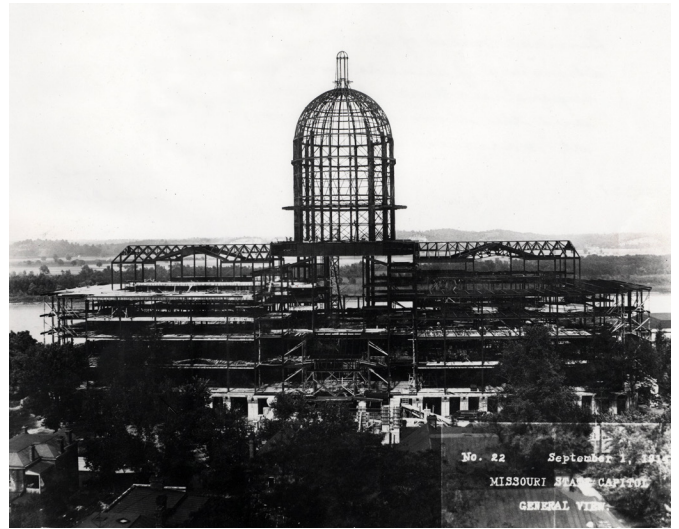
After two years of construction, renovations of our State Capitol building are complete! Some features are fairly obvious; the statues surrounding the building, like the above statue of Thomas Jefferson that stands guard on the south steps, have shed their green, weathered appearance in favor of their original bronze facade. Crumbling steps have been repaired and surfaces polished. The budget of this project was \$30 million — roughly 10 times the original cost of the building, which was constructed for \$3.5 million in 1917 following the loss of the previous

Missouri Capitol building to fire. Over the course of the project, the century-old building received structural and cosmetic repairs, including repairs to 4,520 exterior stones. This number is less than eight percent of the total stones in the Capitol, which is a strong testament to the skill of the original builders. 170,000 square feet of the exterior was inspected, cleaned, and waterproofed. In this *Good News*, we take a look at our Capitol's past alongside recent renovations to show you how history has been indeed been restored in Jefferson City.

Did you know?

The State Capitol you know today is the third such structure in Jefferson City, and the sixth in the state's history. Missouri's capital city was originally St. Louis, then briefly in St. Charles, before anchoring in the small river town of Jefferson City in 1826. In 1837, the first Capitol burned to the ground, but construction on a second, much larger building had already begun nearby. The structure was enlarged in the late 1880s to accommodate a growing government, but it, too, burned on Feb. 5, 1911, in one of the most spectacular fires in Missouri's history. Despite a total loss of the structure, many state records were rescued through the heroic actions of a mass of volunteers, prisoners, legislators and public officials.

The majestic building that now sits atop the bluff is 437 feet long and 300 feet wide at its center, with a towering dome that reaches 262 feet above the basement floor. Though the legislative work that takes place in the State Capitol is its principal function, the building is literally a museum of public art; a brilliant reflection of our state's people and history. The photos to the right show the process of construction on the current Capitol — notice the early-era automobiles parked outside! Though much of the Capitol grounds and surrounding area has changed immensely over the last 100 years, the Capitol building itself has remained relatively unchanged, keeping guard over her state in Jefferson City.



The above three photos are sourced from the state of Missouri's Digital Archives

Throughout the two-year renovation process, the Capitol building was wrapped in scaffolding and protective sheeting so that workers could continue the process throughout all four seasons. As you can see here, some strong storms occasionally tore away at the protective layer, but incredibly, a tornado that destroyed structures along Capitol Avenue left the Capitol building unscathed.



photo via the state of Missouri's Digital Archives

Small but significant details, like these elaborately decorated capitals that sit atop each column, were paid special attention during the renovation process. The above photo shows a capital before it was attached to a column during the original construction of the Capitol building in the early 1900s, and the below photo shows them restored in late 2020.



In this 1917 photo (right), members of the original Capitol Commission perch atop the dome while the capstone is put in place. As part of the recent restoration project, the dome received new energy-efficient exterior lighting, proving an added benefit of allowing the illumination to change hues in honor of special occasions.



The statue of Ceres that sits atop the dome also received much-needed restoration, which took several months to complete. The public was invited to view the statue when she was taken down from the Capitol, and then again after she had been restored. Other statues and fixtures (see the signing of the Louisiana Purchase and lamp above) around the Capitol were given similar, yet less extensive treatment.



photo via the state of Missouri's Digital Archives

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Latest MCC Messenger Celebrates Missouri's Bicentennial



Messenger
A quarterly publication by the Missouri Catholic Conference

CELEBRATING MISSOURI'S BICENTENNIAL

Two hundred years ago,
the territory of Missouri joined the United States. In this Messenger, we take a pause from policy reporting to look back at two centuries of Missouri state and church history as we ready to celebrate the bicentennial in 2020.

Did you know?
August 10, 1820: The state of Missouri was admitted to the Union. It was the first state to be admitted to the Union after the American Revolution.

February 15, 1824
The Missouri Catholic Conference was founded. It was the first Catholic organization in the state to be founded after the American Revolution.

September 24, 1820
The Missouri Catholic Conference was founded. It was the first Catholic organization in the state to be founded after the American Revolution.

March 12, 1820
The Missouri Catholic Conference was founded. It was the first Catholic organization in the state to be founded after the American Revolution.

June 12, 1820
The Missouri Catholic Conference was founded. It was the first Catholic organization in the state to be founded after the American Revolution.

April 20, 1820
The Missouri Catholic Conference was founded. It was the first Catholic organization in the state to be founded after the American Revolution.

May 17, 1820
The Missouri Catholic Conference was founded. It was the first Catholic organization in the state to be founded after the American Revolution.

March 22, 1820
The Missouri Catholic Conference was founded. It was the first Catholic organization in the state to be founded after the American Revolution.

July 12, 1820
The Missouri Catholic Conference was founded. It was the first Catholic organization in the state to be founded after the American Revolution.

The Church Spreads West
The Missouri Catholic Conference was founded. It was the first Catholic organization in the state to be founded after the American Revolution.

Missouri will celebrate its bicentennial in 2021! In the latest MCC *Messenger*, we take a pause from policy reporting to highlight Missouri's church and state history. Learn about how Catholicism in Missouri paved the way for the Church's westward movement in the United States, and discover facts you might not have known about your home state. Look for this issue in your diocesan papers mid-December, or read it anytime online at mocatholic.org.



The Missouri Catholic Advocacy Network
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