

A Virtual Field Trip

With travel and gatherings curtailed by the pandemic, many shrines and museums throughout the world graciously welcomed visitors through the “magic” of the internet. One such shrine is our country’s national Catholic church...the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington, D.C.

The Catholic Church in the United States is dedicated to Mary under her title of the Immaculate Conception. The Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception is celebrated on December 8th. Why not plan to take a virtual tour of this beautiful Basilica that belongs to all Catholics in the USA, and honors Mary, our patroness. Even though not there in person, this virtual experience will allow you to linger and pray at so many sacred spaces within the Basilica.

You can take this virtual tour at www.nationalshrine.org/virtual-tour

Here are some activities that you can do during your tour:

- In the Great Upper Church, the Trinity Dome mosaic features 18 saints. See how many you can identify and name.
- Visit the small chapels that portray the Joyful, Glorious and Sorrowful mysteries of the rosary. Pray the rosary, saying each decade in the chapel of each mystery.
- Our Blessed Mother has many titles which portray some special attribute of her, or what she means to us. Many nations around the world have also given Mary a title that connects her to the people of that nationality. Wander the Basilica and find all the many small chapels dedicated to Mary under various titles. Keep a list of these titles. When you have compiled the many titles, you can pray to Mary asking her to pray for you after each title. This prayer form is called a Litany.
- Find the chapels dedicated to various women saints and martyrs. Choose one or two to learn more about them.



There is so much to see and learn and pray. Enjoy your virtual visit!

*Immaculate Heart of Mary,
pray for all of us!*