

A Concise History of Saint Anthony Cathedral Basilica

Although St. Anthony Cathedral Basilica itself was built in 1903, its roots reach back into the Nineteenth Century. In 1880, Rev. Vital Quinon encouraged the Catholics of Beaumont to build St. Louis Church at the corner of Bowie and Orleans. This was the first Catholic Church in Beaumont and was a wooden frame structure that could accommodate about three hundred people. In 1894, St. Louis Church was moved to the square block of property bounded by Forsythe, Jefferson, Wall and Archie Streets. The Catholic history of Beaumont slowly developed until January 10, 1901, the date when the Lucas Oil Gusher burst forth. The economy grew and Beaumont's population swelled; the small wooden church building could no longer hold the great number of people who lined up to celebrate Mass each Sunday. Rev. William Lee came to the parish in May 1897. He drew up plans for a new brick church, the present building. The cornerstone was laid in June 1903, but the structure was not completed until 1907. On January 27, 1907 Most Reverend Nicholas Gallagher, Bishop of the Diocese of Galveston - Houston dedicated Saint Anthony Church.

The church building has undergone many changes through the leadership of several pastors. The first major interior restoration took place under Monsignor E. A. Kelly in 1937. Stained-glass windows were installed throughout the church and symbolic oil paintings were added behind the altar. With the inception of the Diocese of Beaumont in 1966, St. Anthony Church was elevated to the rank of a Cathedral by Pope Paul VI. In 1972 Msgr. M. F. Enderle began the second major renovation of this sacred site in accord with the Second Vatican Council's renewal of the Sacred Liturgy. A sacrificial altar was introduced facing the people, an appropriate bishop's chair became a permanent fixture in the sanctuary, the art on the sanctuary and throughout the Cathedral was renewed, the pews were refinished, kneelers replaced, carpeting installed, and new acoustical and lighting systems added. Extensive landscaping to the grounds was introduced, the exterior was renewed, the copper dome restored and a 2,500-pipe Wicks Organ installed. Very Reverend Bennie Patillo undertook the building of a new Cathedral Center and Chapel-office complex that was dedicated in 1991. From 1996 to 2004 Very Reverend Jeremiah J. McGrath repaired and liturgically renovated Saint Anthony Cathedral to its present glory. On October 17, 2004 Most Reverend Curtis J. Guillory, S.M.D., D.D., Bishop of Beaumont, re-dedicated and consecrated historic Saint Anthony Cathedral as the Mother Church for Catholics throughout Southeast Texas.

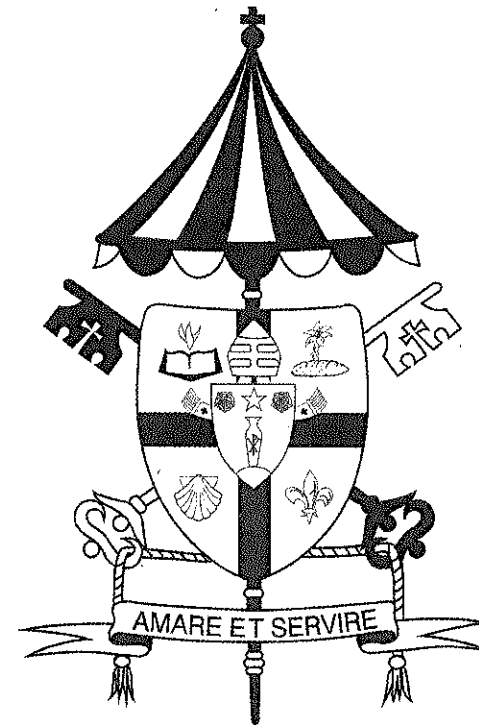
On July 11, 2006, Pope Benedict XVI proclaimed Saint Anthony Cathedral a Minor Basilica.

MATER ECCLESIA
"Mother Church"



PORTA CAELI
"Gate of Heaven"

SAINT ANTHONY CATHEDRAL BASILICA'S PILGRIMS' PATH



The Cathedral Basilica of Saint Anthony is designed in the Early Christian Romanesque style and modeled after the 12th Century Basilica of San Clement in Rome. This ancient Roman Basilica's lowest level contains the 1st Century house - church of Saint Pope Clement, 3rd Pope after Saint Peter.

Saint Anthony's edifice corner stone was laid in 1903 and the church was first dedicated in 1907. With the inception of the Diocese of Beaumont in 1966, St. Anthony parish church was elevated by Pope Paul VI to the rank of a Cathedral. In 2006 Pope Benedict XVI named Saint Anthony Cathedral a Minor Basilica.

AMARE ET SERVIRE
"To Love and Serve"

- 1** Universal Call to Holiness Doors
- 2** Baptismal Font
- 3** Virtue of Humility Mosaic
- 4** Virtue of Prudence Mosaic
- 5** Virtue of Justice Mosaic
- 6** Virtue of Temperance Mosaic
- 7** Virtue of Fortitude Mosaic
- 8** Virtue of Reverence Mosaic
- 9** Virtue of the Fear of Lord Mosaic
- 10** Virtue of Charity and Place of Honor Mosaic
- 11** Altar, Reliquary and Pulpit
Altar contains the relics of St. Anthony of Pauda and St. Katharine Drexel along with the images of these saints
- 12** St. Clement's Apse, Bishop's Chair and Presbytery
- 13** Basilica Papal Bell
- 14** Chapel of Our Lady of Life
- 15** Chapel of Our Lady of Guadalupe
Chapel contains the Virtue of Hope Mosaic an exact replica of the image of Our Lady of Guadalupe and relics of St. Therese, the Little Flower; St. Sr. Faustina and Pope John Paul II
- 16** Sacred Oils
- 17** St. Joan of Arc Relief
- 18** Western Church Fathers and Beatitudes
- 19** St. Joseph's Shrine
- 20** Sacred Heart Shrine and Sacristy
- 21** St. Anthony's Shrine
- 22** Eastern Church Fathers and Beatitudes
- 23** St. James of Compostela Relief
- 24** Dome of Glory
- 25** Basilica Papal Umbrella
- 26** Chapel of Our Lady of Eternal Life
- 27** Chapel of The Sacrament and Virtue of Faith Mosaic
- 28** Chapel of The Cross
Contains the relic of the Tur Cross, the 9/11 steel beam cross relic from the World Trade Center in New York City, Romanoff Icons and 500 Centenary Cross of the Americas
- 29** Great Bronze Doors
- 30** Good Shepherd Plaza
- 31** St. Anthony Grotto
- 32** Colonnade of Christ the Redeemer
- RR** Restroom with baby changing table

