



A Parish for the Federal City St. Patrick's in Washington, 1794-1994

Morris J MacGregor

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As the oldest Roman Catholic parish in Washington, D.C., St. Patrick's has witnessed the city's evolution from a struggling community into a world capital. Its history provides a particularly useful vantage point from which to trace the development of major social and political issues that have shaped the region and the nation. Morris J. MacGregor's narrative traces the history of St. Patrick's from its first years in a new capital, through its triumphal decades as the great downtown parish at the center of a powerful nation, to recent challenges in the face of profound change in the American inner city. Many familiar names appear, from the Marquis de Lafayette, hero of the Revolution, to Teddy Roosevelt, hero of San Juan Hill; from President Andrew Jackson and Chief Justice Roger B. Taney to Lyndon Johnson and Earl Warren; from St. John Neumann to St. Frances Cabrini. As Washington's mother church, St. Patrick's has transcended the usual responsibilities of an American parish to assume a sometimes crucial role in church-state relations, in both national and local affairs. Its diverse congregation has provided clear-cut and measurable reactions to issues - such as immigration, race relations, and universal education - that have been pivotal in shaping both national policies and the history of the Catholic church in the United States. Because the history of an urban parish contributes valuable insights into the social, economic, and political evolution of urban America, this book is a valuable resource for the study of urban, local, and American social and church history.

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