

St. Mary's Greek Byzantine Catholic  
Church, Church  
Cambria City Neighborhood  
401 Power Street  
Johnstown  
Cambria County  
Pennsylvania

HABS No. PA-5742-A

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11-JOTO,  
46-A-

PHOTOGRAPHS  
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey  
National Park Service  
Department of the Interior  
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HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

St. Mary's Greek Byzantine Catholic Church

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Location: 401 Power Street, Cambria City, Johnstown, Cambria County, Pa.

Description: The Byzantine-style St. Mary's Greek Catholic church measures approximately 75' x 132'. The main front, facing north, has a gable facade flanked by tall belfry towers. The church is built of brick and the facades are decorated with at least ten different patterns of brickwork. There is a very high quality of intricate stone carving around the three round-headed entrances in the main facade and there are open stonework panels in the upper story of the towers. The towers are capped by domes which harmonize with the large central dome over the crossing. The main entrance has a mosaic panel representing the Blessed Virgin in the tympanum; above this is a large Diocletian window which dominates the principal facade.

The interior is divided into nave and side aisles by elegant two-story marble columns which support galleries that run three-quarters the length of the church. The nave has a barrel-vaulted ceiling, which is decorated with murals. A beautiful mosaic baldacchino imported from Pecs, Hungary, is situated over the altar.

History: St. Mary's Greek Catholic Church was established in 1895. The first church, a wooden structure, was dedicated in that year. The builders were Zahniser & Co., a contracting firm from Greensburg, and the cost was \$4,000.

In 1900 the cornerstone of the second church was laid. This brick church was dedicated in June 1901. In a few years this church was also too small. In 1919 John T. Comes, a noted church architect from Pittsburgh, was selected to draw up plans and specifications for a new church. Joseph Romano was appointed contractor. The cornerstone of the church was laid on July 5, 1920, and it was dedicated on November 30, 1922.

The parish originally served a Slav community, and in a survey of "The Churches of Johnstown" by Kory in 1972 it was found that 85% of the parish were of Slav descent. Only 5% of the church's 1,010 parishioners resided in Cambria City, with the majority living in other sections of Johnstown and 35% living outside the city limits.

Sources:

Kory, William, B. "The Churches of Johnstown Pennsylvania, Population Survey," (University of Pittsburgh at Johnstown, 1972).

Anniversary pamphlet, St. Mary's Greek Catholic Church, 1945.

Project Information: This report was part of a larger project to document the city of Johnstown, Pennsylvania. The project was undertaken by the Historic American Buildings Survey/Historic American Engineering Record (HABS/HAER), Robert Kapsch, chief, at the request of America's Industrial Heritage Project (AIHP). An overview of history of the city (HABS No. PA-5669) and an overview of the neighborhoods of Cambria City and Minersville (HABS No. PA-5672) provide context for these buildings as well as a comprehensive list of sources. See also additional HABS reports on buildings in the downtown and other neighborhoods.

ST. MARY'S GREEK BYZANTINE  
CATHOLIC CHURCH  
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This report was prepared by Bernadette Goslin in August 1988 under the direction of Alison K. Hoagland, HABS historian, and Kim E. Wallace, the supervisory historian of the project. Goslin's and other project historians' work was published as The Character of a Steel Mill City: Four Historic Neighborhoods of Johnstown, Pennsylvania (Washington, D.C.: HABS/HAER, National Park Service, 1989), edited by Kim E. Wallace. Illustrations in the publication include large format photographs taken by HAER photographer Jet Lowe and 35 mm photographs taken by the project historians.